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MICHAEL MONAHAN

BENIGNA VENA:

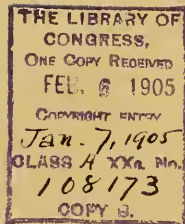
ESSAYS, LITERARY AND PERSONAL

By MICHAEL MONAHAN

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Michael Mann

*At fides et ingeni
Benigna Vena est.*

—Horace, Lib. II-18.

TO MY FRIEND

THOMAS FRANCIS GRADY

OF NEW YORK.

My dear Senator :

Though the literary Patron be no longer held in honor nor the Dedication in fashion, you will I know permit me to write your name on this page, in token of the great debt of kindness you have laid upon me.

We have had some good hours together, in the genial commerce of books—(shall we not have many more such ?)—and with a sympathy now become very rare in the world, backed by a practical generosity that, dropping myself, recalls the Heroic Age of Letters—you have helped a poor dreamer to realize his dream.

Can he do less than to inscribe your honored name here in the forefront of his pages, with the hope, however vain, that for your sake, at least, his Book may long defeat the rasure of time ?

I am, my dear Senator,

Your most sincere and obedient

MICHAEL MONAHAN.

Somerville, N. J., November 21, 1904.

The Contents.

	PAGE
A Ballade of Futility.....	11
Heinrich Heine.....	13
Dr.° Maginn and Father Prout.....	51
Guy de Maupassant.....	87
A Lost Poet.....	95
To the Shade of Lamb.....	101
Captain Costigan.....	106
A Christmas Sermon.....	112
The Endless War.....	116
Claude Tillier.....	123
Henriette Renan.....	131
Byron	143
The Nemesis of Carlyle.....	153
At Poe's Cottage.....	161
Literary Folk.....	167
Dickens: A Reverie.....	175

BENIGNA VENA.

Ballade of Futility.

(In Lieu of Preface to this Book.)

ALACK for the fate that comes to all
Brain-wearied wights of the scribbling trade!
Sib are they to Oblivion's pall,
A circle in water, dust and shade.
Was it for this such stress they made
To scale the slippery peaks of fame,
Only to see their visions fade—
Back to the night from whence they came?

Dear God! the struggle through barren years,
The hope deferred and the waiting long,
And for a guerdon of all their tears,
A briefer date than an idle song.
For not to these do the heights belong,
Where the thronèd bards made glad acclaim,
But Charon's curse and his bitter thong—
Back to the night from whence they came.

For this they bartered their earthly peace,
And let the sweetness of life go by;
Nor recked while they saw the moons decrease,
And the tides of being run scant and dry:—
Yea, even when Death himself drew nigh,
Him would they welcome, nor harshly blame,
Seeing the Portal of Victory—
Back to the night from whence they came!

Tell me, ye dupes of an empty dream,
Is life no more than a pedant's hour,
To spoil of paper a hasty ream,
Then quick to bed with the earth-worm dour?
Eheu! mislikes me your sermon sour,
With its bellman's ending, aye the same:
Fain would I take at least a flower
Back to the night from whence I came.

Poor fools, that stew in your own vain sweat,
Nor ever cease to swither and swink,
Pray, what is the recompense you'll get,
When your red blood turns to water and ink?
A bit of immortal fame, you think—
Aere perennius—that's the game?
But lo! you're snuffed out quick as a wink—
Back to the night from whence you came.

L'ENVOI.

Prince, be you wise in your golden prime:
Live you and love while the pulses flame,
Till careless you pass—sans prose, sans rhyme—
Back to the night from whence you came.



Heinrich Heine.

A Fantasy.



ADAME, if you ask me who is my favorite Poet, I who can deny you nothing, must answer truly, he is none of my own race. Rare are the singers of Erin, Madame, and their Castalia is a fountain of tears: whoso drinks of its sweet sorrow shall never be happy again. Like the fated one who has heard the Banshee's wail, that soul shall in the midst of joy feel the near presence of calamity, a boding at the heart which nothing can silence. This precious blue flower of sorrow is proper to the poets of my beloved Erin. It would not flourish under less tender and humid skies, for it is born of the rainbow of her smiles and tears.

But, Madame, I have from my youth read a mort o' poetry, and have even written a little myself—in-different bad, I may admit without a qualm, since the sin was committed long ago and you were the dear occasion of it. Alas! perhaps it had been better for my peace of mind had I followed the counsel of my old priestly instructors, "to avoid all occasions of sin."

You know, Madame, that the making of poetry is no longer in fashion, for many reasons, but chiefly

because the present age is too banal to inspire or receive it. Meantime we have to deal with prose, or verse that is jejune and vain. Have we not good reason to love our sainted Heinrich, whose prose is better than most English poetry? In truth, if we had not a line of his verse, his prose, brilliant, various, alive with rare imagery, sparkling with the treasures of the richest fancy ever given to poet,—would serve to crown him with bays unfading. True, as he himself said of the gentle Autommarchi, it is a stiletto rather than a style: but what a relief after the divine heaviness of Goethe! He struck fiercely, did our Heinrich, though often he wounded his own breast; and how deep was his gift of tears! What he said of another is truer still of himself: “He was the petted darling of the pale Goddess of Tragedy. Once in a fit of wild tenderness she kissed him as though she would draw his whole heart through his lips with one long, passionate kiss. The heart began to bleed, and suddenly understood all the sorrows of this world, and was filled with infinite sympathy.”



To know our Heine, Madame, is to renew one's faith in the old Greek mythology—a system in which the aristocracy of mind is finely manifest—and to worship Nature as she was worshipped in the antique world. Nay, this modern Heinrich Heine was but an avatar of the old Hermes—you see, Madame, the initial letter is the same and yet the discovery is original with me! Heine himself took

little care to cloak his divine origin. Life and light and love, while they were granted to him, these were the elements of his religion. Early and late he paid his vows to Venus. His voice was a protest harking back to old Olympus against the new Religion of Pain. Much pain he came to suffer himself, perhaps through the malice of the later Dispensation; but he died as he had lived, a son of the gods. Surely the immortal mind was never stronger in him than when from his "mattress grave" where he lay half blind and paralyzed, his unconquered spirit sent forth this message, matchless in its pathos and irony:

"What avails it me that enthusiastic youths and maidens crown my marble bust with laurel, when the withered hands of an aged nurse are pressing a poultice of Spanish flies behind my ears? What avails it me that all the roses of Shiraz glow and waft incense for me? Alas! Shiraz is two thousand miles from the Rue de l'Amsterdam where in the wearisome loneliness of my sick room I get no scent, except it be, perhaps, the perfume of warmed towels. Alas! God's satire weighs heavy on me. The great Author of the Universe, the Aristophanes of Heaven, was bent on demonstrating with crushing force to me the little, earthly German Aristophanes, how my wittiest sarcasms were only pitiful attempts at jesting in comparison with his, and how miserably I am beneath him in humor, in colossal mockery!"

It is strange, Madame, how godly men pointed the finger of condemnation at the stricken Poet, putting the Christian anathema upon him. Our poor Hermes was having *his* Passion and the sight of his agonies filled the pietists with rapture. In mediaeval times, still regretted in some centres of Christian instruction as the true ages of faith, there was a sort of zealots called flagellants, who used to run madly over Europe, beating themselves—and murdering the Jews. How little essential change has taken place in the religious spirit! Now Heine hated this spirit with a hatred bequeathed to him by generations of his hunted and suffering race, that is to say, like a Jew; and he also hated it like the true Hellene he was: so it took what revenge it could upon him. The little German princelings who put up conductors on their funny little courts and castles to dodge the lightnings of his wit, also furnished some diversion in kind. For this man had written—

“The people have time enough, they are immortal:
Kings only are mortal.”

“The human spirit has its rights and will not be
rocked to sleep by the lullaby of church bells.”

“Men will no longer be put off with promissory
notes upon Heaven.”



Madame, when I think of my favorite Poet, whom I so love, though of an alien race, there comes to me a vision which I must put into rude and graceless words—ah, how unworthy of him who has painted

it for all time with the iris-hued pencil of fancy! I seem to stand on the banks of the blue Rhine, looking over a fair prospect of vine-covered champaign; quaint villages shining in the cheerful sun, alternating with the umbrage of forest; now and again the river flashing its silver upon the sight;—and still farther beyond, a smiling expanse of flower-decked meadow and plain. But in all that beauteous picture my fancy seeks a little garden, tangled and overgrown with grasses and wild flowers, where the gardener's care has not been felt for many a day. There, in its most neglected and obscure corner, when the moon is risen, I see the cold pure gleam of marble; a broken statue of the antique Venus, fallen from its pedestal and lying half buried under leaves and vines. And see, while I wait, there comes with fearful, faltering step a boy whose pale young face is fixed with the resolve of a strange passion. Ah me! what ghostly tryst is this? Casting a swift glance around, he flings himself upon his knees beside the fallen Queen of Love and kisses the silent marble lips, murmuring broken words which are not for me to hear. Rising, the solemn stars look upon a face transfigured by destiny and the sacrament of the Ideal.

A nightingale sings.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Now I see a youth leaving the gates of an ancient city. With knapsack on shoulder he trudges away joyously, as one to whom life opens its fairest promise. It is the boy of the deserted garden, but older grown, and with a light in his eyes that owes noth-

ing to the flight of years. Gaily he begins his journey, Nature bidding him on with her eternal smile that only the young understand. Oh, never has she companioned a more memorable pilgrim! But soft! the poet's heart within him speaks: "It is the first of May, and spring is pouring a foam of white blossoms like a sea of life over the earth. Green, the color of hope, is everywhere around me. Everywhere flowers are blooming like beautiful miracles, and my heart will bloom again also. This heart is likewise a flower of strange and wondrous sort. It is no modest violet, no smiling rose, no pure lily which a maiden may cherish in her white bosom; which withers today and blooms again tomorrow. No, this heart rather resembles that strange heavy flower from the woods of Brazil which, according to the legend, blooms but once in a century. . . . No, Agnes, this flower blooms not often, nor without effort, but now it moves, and swells, and bursts in my bosom. . . . My love has burst its bud and shoots upward in eternal dithyrambs of poesy and joy!"

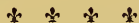


After an interval I see the wayfarer again, pausing at a stately old house in Hamburg, where kind welcome is given him; kindest greeting of all by a fair young girl whose dove-like eyes, mirroring a truthful soul, rest upon him with a certain pity. Ah, how he trembles at her most careless touch, how his glance follows her every motion, and when she is passive, rivets itself upon her like a devotee before a shrine!

They are in a deep garden, these two, where the scent of flowers is heavy on the air. It is a sweet hour, breathing yet the full fragrance of a perfect day. But the moon mounting up sends a long arrow of light across the shimmering foliage, touching the girl's pale cheek with the pure glory of marble. The youth has taken her hands while she turns away her head, as if loath to hear his impassioned speech. These words at length float to me on the garden scents, bringing death in life and an immortal despair to one that hears—"I love, I love thee, Cousin Amelie. And what sayest thou to me?"

"Alas, Cousin, it must not be!"

A nightingale sings.



The years take wing with the swiftness of a dream, and now I stand in a great hall filled with the trophies of art gathered from all ages and climes to make the priceless spoil of an imperial city. Everywhere the divinity of marble, pulseless and serene, while beyond these sacred walls the din of vulgar life rises impertinent. And lo! there in sovereign state upon a lofty pedestal I see the antique Venus of the neglected garden by the Rhine, where the boy kept his tryst with the Ideal. The divinities make no sign, but well I know her for the same that in old time with many a witching guise succored her mortal son Aeneas.

*Quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque,
Falsis ludis imaginibus?*

Her beauteous arms are gone, that erst encircled gods and godlike men, yet as the past was hers, the future shall be also. Time has wrought her this maim, jealous of her superior sway, and she has suffered other wrongs: yet is she still divinely content, though her temples have long been dust and Paphos with all its rosy rites is become a name. For her rule endureth ever in the hearts of men.

And if you ask a proof, see now that haggard, broken man who drags himself wearily to the feet of the immortal Goddess. It is he, the youth of long ago, who kissed her marble lips and gave his soul unto her keeping. Alas! how cruelly have the years dealt with him: yet he looks up to her with a rapture of unchanged worship and love. O miracle of faith, in which the finite rises to the infinite, the mortal blends with the immortal!—see how she returns his gaze with a fulness of divine compassion, as if to say:

“Thou seest I have no arms and may not help thee!”

Then instantly methought the walls and statues vanished, leaving these two alone in the garden where I first saw them. . . .

And a nightingale sang!



The Poet's Life.

Heinrich Heine was born December 12, 1799, in the city of Dusseldorf on the Rhine. For a long time the accepted date of his birth was January 1, 1800, and the poet refused to correct the error, saying he was unquestionably one of the first men of the Nineteenth century. Also let it be set down here, he was born a Jew—a statement which would have sounded worse then than it does now, though in this culminating Christian age there is still room for improvement. But let us give thanks—all of us, Jews and Gentiles—we have come a long way!

Heine imbibed in his cradle and during his early years a full share of the *Juden-Schmerz*, the great sorrow of Israel. One of his biographers describes him as “in soul an early Hebrew, in spirit an ancient Greek, in mind a republican of the Nineteenth century.” There is an apostasy to be charged to him—of which we shall speak later on—and it must be admitted that, Jew himself, he did not spare his own race the scorpion sting of his sarcasm. But a Jew he was in his better moods, in his seasons of calm and power; and a Jew he remained to the last. It is good to recall here his noble confession: “The writer of these lines may be proud that his ancestors came of the noble House of Israel, that he is a descendant of the martyrs who gave a God and a moral code to the world, and who have fought and suffered on every battlefield of thought.”

Heine's childish years and boyhood were as happy as those of a poet should be. Of this enchanted period he has left us a characteristic and delightful

record. Indeed, he has told the story so well that no one may presume to tell it after him without borrowing the poet's own words. For the old German Fatherland, however its political systems might provoke his scathing irony, for his native city of Dusseldorf, he kept during his long exile in after years, the tenderest affection. His mind was at home on the Seine; his heart on the Rhine. There, as he wittily said, were seven towns to dispute the honor of being his birthplace,—Schilda, Krahwinkel, Polkwitz, Bockum, Dulken, Gottingen and Schoppenstedt. There his poet soul first awoke to life and love and beauty. There he lisped that musical German speech which his genius was to fuse into lyric forms that will keep his memory alive in German hearts so long as the Rhine shall run its course toward the sea.

Heine's father, Samson Heine, was an amiable, handsome man, and the poet always preserved a loving recollection of him; but, like most great men, he was his mother's son. What lover of the poet needs to be told much of the "old woman who lives by the Dammthor"*; or of the mutual love extending over so many years, unchilled, unchanged; or of the tender deception which the stricken poet practised from his mattress-grave, keeping her in ignorance of his awful fate? To me it is the finest chapter in Heine's life, the one to which we turn for rest when wearied with his constant feuds, brilliantly as he fought them.

Heine's mother had been a Miss Betty Von Geldern. She might have made a better marriage in a

*One of the gates of Hamburg.

worldly way, but it would hardly have resulted in so good a poet. She deserved well of her gifted son and he of her. She brought him into the world; he immortalized her. Mother Heine lived a hundred years before the New Woman, and yet she made few mistakes. One of these was, however, rather serious—that Heinrich could, would or should be anything save a poet. Having been well educated herself—she read Latin, I fear, better than the New Woman—Mother Heine followed with eager interest the growth of her son's mind. "She played the chief part in my development," he tells us; "she made the programme of all my studies, and, even before my birth, began her plans for my education." There were other children to divide her care, but her darling was the eldest born, the glory of whose genius she lived to see, and whom at last she followed to the grave.

Literature, regarded as a profession, was held in small favor by the Heine family, and especially by Uncle Salomon Heine, the great banker of Hamburg, of whom we hear so much in the life-story of the poet. Uncle Salomon indeed—although he helped Heinrich from time to time and never wholly abandoned him, except in making his will—esteemed the first lyrist of Germany as little better than the fool of the family. There was another uncle on the mother's side, Simon Von Geldern, who seems to have had a literary turn, and who gave the young poet much secret encouragement. Having little money to back his opinions, Uncle Simon was distinctly inferior as a moral force to Uncle Salo-

mon; and, therefore, he, for the most part, kept his heretical views to himself. But the Muse of Literary History has done tardy justice to the poor relation, and Uncle Simon Von Geldern will always have his place in the chronicle.

However, I am inclined to think more kindly of Salomon Heine than are some of the poet's biographers. It is scarcely a just cause of reproach that Uncle Salomon, the Jew prince of Hamburg (as he was called), should have rated commercial values so high and literary values so low. He had known the Ghetto, with its privations, its galling humiliations, its bitter sense of inferiority. Rising at length, by his own exertions, to opulence, it was hardly to be expected that he should view with tolerance the adoption of so unlucrative a pursuit as poetry by a member of his family. Yet, as I have said, though he looked askance at his scribbling, ne'er-do-well nephew, he never absolutely gave him the cold shoulder. The provocation was often strong enough, I promise you. Once Heinrich went over to London on a sight-seeing tour, Uncle Salomon furnishing the needful. Besides an allowance for traveling expenses, Uncle Salomon entrusted the poet with a draft for £400, which Heinrich was on no account to cash, but merely to preserve and, if need were, exhibit, as establishing the credit of the family. Heinrich never could be got to look at money in that way. His rule through life was to spend his money and every other good thing as soon as he came into possession of it—often, indeed, by anticipation; so you may be sure it didn't take him

long to realize on the valuable bit of paper. Uncle Salomon was furious, and I fancy many a Christian uncle would not have spared his wrath in a like extremity. To his angry and just reproaches the "fool of the family" coolly answered: "My dear uncle, did you really expect to have to pay nothing for the honor of bearing my name?"



Heine very early felt the French influence which became so controlling an element in his political philosophy and which gave so decided a bent to his literary genius. History put on her seven-league boots while little Heinrich played by the Dussel, or in the green alleys of the Schlossgarten. Just a month before the poet was born, in the memorable year 1799, his great hero, Napoleon, had achieved his famous *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire. The Revolution knelt before its master, and then history-making proceeded in earnest. In 1806—Heinrich is now seven years old and the First Consul is Emperor—Duke William took leave of the Duchy of Berg and the dashing Joachim Murat entered as Regent. The Rhine Confederation had been formed and the German States beaten one after another. Indeed, so many great events were happening at this time—History paying off her arrears—that a clear head has much ado to follow them in their right order and relation. Happily that is not our present business. Amid all this marching and counter-marching, *allons-ing* and *alliancing*, bayoneting and bulleting, partitioning and protocoliz-

ing, little Heinrich played with his mates in the quaint streets of Dusseldorf, or at home tumbled over his toy castles as merrily as the French armies busy at the same work in kind.

But one never-to-be-forgotten day the statue of the Elector Jan Wilhelm was missed from the town square, and the French troops marched in, the "drum-major throwing his gold-knobbed baton as high as the first story," while the drunken cripple, Gumpertz, rolled in the gutter, singing:

Ca ira! Ca ira!

A wonderful day that was to the little boy, his eager heart aflame with the new marvel of all this fanfare and soldiering. And wonderful days were to come, listening to Monsieur LeGrand, the French tambour,—“so long billeted upon us, who looked like a very devil and yet was such an angelic character and such an incomparable drummer!” We all know how he taught the young Heinrich with his rat-a-tat-tat some lessons of modern history in which he, the brave LeGrand, had borne a part; and we have been glad to learn in our turn. Nay, we may yet hearken with pleasure to the recitals of Monsieur LeGrand.

“I saw the march across the Simplon, the Emperor in front, with the brave Grenadiers climbing up behind, while the startled eagles screamed and the glaciers thundered in the distance; I saw the Emperor clasping the standard on the bridge of Lodi; I saw the Emperor in his gray cloak at Marengo; I saw the Emperor on horseback at the battle of the

Pyramids—nothing but smoke and Mamelukes; I saw the Emperor at Austerlitz—twing! how the bullets whizzed over the smooth ice! I saw, I heard the battle of Jena—dum, dum, dum—I saw, I heard the battles of Eylau, Wagram—no, I could hardly stand it. Monsieur LeGrand drummed till my own ear-drum was nearly cracked.”

But a more wonderful day was yet to come, for History was all the time getting on in her seven-league boots. Every day, nay, every hour, the French were upsetting boundaries and generally making havoc with the established order. As in the fairy tale, the Giant—that is, the people—had awakened from his enchanted sleep, and the whole world was magically in motion. Murat, the bold Joachim, exchanged his spurs for the crown of Naples. This was in 1808. King Joachim thereupon ceded the Duchy of Berg to his lord and master, Napoleon, who transferred it to his brother, Louis, King of Holland. The pendulum was swinging back and the reign of liberty and equality was producing royalties with a vengeance. But some good came out of all this, and especially to the long persecuted Jews. (We are not to forget that Heine was himself a Jew). In 1812 the Code Napoleon was extended to the German provinces under the French influence. The mists of the Middle Ages took flight. The Ghettos gave up their ghost.

It was in the palace gardens of Dusseldorf that young Heinrich saw the Emperor for the first time, the only sovereign to whom his republican con-

science ever yielded loyalty. Years afterward he painted the scene with the strong hues of his genius, so that we may see it through the boy's eager eyes:

"But what were my feelings when I saw him at last with my own eyes—O beatific vision—himself, the Emperor!

"It was in the allée of the palace gardens at Dusseldorf.

"As I shouldered my way through the gaping crowd, I thought of the deeds and battles which Monsieur LeGrand had portrayed for me with his drum; my heart beat the grand march—and yet I thought at the same time of the police regulations which ordered that no one should ride through the allée, under a penalty of five thalers. And the Emperor with his retinue rode right through the allée. The shuddering trees bowed down to him as he passed; the sunbeams peeped timidly through the green foliage, and in the blue heaven above there sailed into sight a golden star. He wore his plain green uniform and his small, world-famous cap. He rode a white palfrey which stepped with such calm pride, with such assurance and dignity—had I been the Crown Prince of Prussia I should still have envied that pony! Carelessly, with a loose seat, the Emperor held up the reins in one hand, and with the other patted good-naturedly his horse's neck. It was a sunlit, marble hand, a mighty hand, one of those two hands that had tamed the hydra of anarchy and quelled the feud of nations. His face was of the same hue we see in the marble busts of Greeks and Romans; the features wore the same expression

of calm dignity that the ancients have, and on them was written, 'Thou shalt have none other gods than me!'

"The Emperor rode calmly down the allée. Behind him, on snorting chargers, bedizened with gold and jewels, rode his retinue. The drums beat, the trumpets blared. At my side mad Aloysius spun round and round, and clattered out the names of his generals; close by drunken Gumpertz bellowed, and the people shouted with a thousand voices, 'Long live the Emperor!'"

* * * *

When Heine was sixteen his family thought to decide his vocation for him, and so he was sent to Frankfort-on-Main, where there was a ghetto, the sweet relish of which the poet never forgot.

He stayed there only a few weeks, and then Uncle Salomon, at Hamburg, tried his hand at making something other than a poet out of his nephew. Had Uncle Salomon possessed a little more imagination, he might have spared himself a humiliating failure. It was impossible to drum the commercial ABC into Heinrich's wayward head. Even his watch, as he tells us, had a habit of going wrong and getting into the hands of the Jews. To make matters worse, the graceless youth, for whose future Uncle Salomon would not have given a sixpence, committed the folly of falling in love with Uncle Salomon's beautiful daughter, Amelie. If Heine's cousin had been a less prudent and sensible girl, we should probably have lost a deal of fine poetry, for, of course, they would have got married somehow,

and Uncle Salomon would have paid the bills until the end of the chapter. But Amelie was much of her father's mind. She gave her cousin small encouragement and—a more cruel thing—even told him she did not like his poetry. In the end, and that was very soon, she married a young man of approved Hebrew descent and strictly commercial aspirations, whose name I haven't taken the trouble to remember.

The critics and biographers have generally deduced from this little passage in Heine's life that he carried through all the remaining years an incurable wound of the heart. It is vastly unpopular to doubt this, and ungallant in the bargain; but, though Heine suffered acutely from the disappointment of his first pure love, I am afraid it argues a misreading of the facts to impute to him a lifelong Wertherian anguish.

Leaving Hamburg with this bitter-sweet memory and finding in his sense of pain and loss, food for the lyrical impulse now maturing with his powers, Heine returned home to prepare himself for a profession. He entered the University of Bonn in 1819.

Napoleon being now at St. Helena, the hand was set back on the clock. So far as lay in its power, the Holy Alliance had undone the work of the Revolution. A Jew might not practise the profession of law—no profession, indeed, save medicine—in the Kingdom of Prussia; so nothing was left for Heine but to apostatize or lay aside his ambition—which indeed was rather that of his family—to become

doctor juris. Urged by his relatives and friends (who saw no harm in thus evading a barbarous prescription) he chose the former alternative. For this he has been unsparingly, though it seems to me unjustly, condemned by the rigorists of his own race. Heine himself affected to regard lightly the circumstance of his quasi-conversion to Lutheranism. With incomparable irony he tells us: "That I became a Christian is the fault of those Saxons who changed sides so suddenly at Leipzig; or else of Napoleon who need never have gone to Russia; or of the schoolmaster who taught him geography at Brienne and neglected to tell him that it was cold in Moscow in winter. If Montalembert became minister and could drive me away from Paris, I would turn Catholic. Paris is well worth one mass!"

Within a very few years the enlightened government of Prussia paid this notable convert to the state religion the handsome compliment of interdicting his books. It is certain that Heine always bitterly regretted the concession he had made to a mediæval prejudice. However lightly one may hold a traditional faith, one may choose an easier method of parting with it than by an act of formal and public apostasy. No man cared less than Heine for the anathemas of other men, yet he remained keenly sensitive to reproaches on this score. The degree of *doctor juris* which cost him so dear brought him nothing. It was from Gottingen, by the way, he received this learned distinction—Gottingen, which he has visited with some of the happiest strokes of his satirical genius.

Heine was a brilliant but irregular student. He was reading and rhyming poetry when he ought to have been busy with the pandects.

So acute and native is the quality of his wit that the chronicle of his student days may be read to-day with interest as fresh as when it was first given to the world. Horace's *qualis ab incepto* is eminently true of Heine—he seems to have begun at once with an assured and individual style.

Prosing with professors over the Justinian Code came to an end at last. In his doctoral thesis Heine made a slip on the noun *caput*—the thesis was, of course, in Latin—and always remembered it with a twinge—which shows he was not entirely devoid of the pedantry of the place that he has so amusingly satirized. He had been previously rusticated from the University on account of a duel—his personal courage was then and ever after undoubted—and the pundits of the institution looked with small favor on the poetizing young Jew. Yet in the realm of letters, Gottingen is, and ever will be, better known from the residence of Heine than from any other circumstance in its venerable history. Hegel owes to Heine the sole humorous association with his name. To the readers of the *Harzreise* I need not recall the famous description of the town of Gottingen, “celebrated for its sausages and University;” or the happy application of the term Philistine, which has passed into universal currency.

It was in 1824 that Heine shook the dust of Gottingen from his feet and carried away much of its learned dust in his brain. Three years earlier his

great idol Napoleon had died at St. Helena—"the saviour of the world" (was Heine's characteristic comment) "who suffered under Hudson Lowe, as it is written in the gospels of Las Casas, of O'Meara and of Autommarchi." And with what is perhaps the bitterest stroke of his unequaled irony, he added: "Strange, the greatest adversaries of the Emperor have already found an awful fate.* Londonderry cut his throat; Louis 18th rotted on his throne, and Prof. Saalfeld is still professor at Gottingen!"



Seven years, rich with the outpouring of his genius, followed from the day Heine left the classic precincts of Gottingen until he turned his face toward France and Paris. In the interval he had, in spite of the reigning sovereignty of the great Goethe, established his title as the first lyric poet of Germany.

Heine was proud to call himself a son of the Revolution, and such he was, in poetic as well as political impulse. But he was also a son of the free Rhine and would make good his claim to the title. No man more fully appreciated the sacrifices made by the French people in the cause of human liberty. As a Jew, the descendant of a hated and persecuted race, he felt a special obligation of gratitude.

Criticism can take no account of the blemishes in Heine's character as a German or as a Jew. The measure of his literary accomplishment raises him

* Byron's "Carotid-artery-cutting Castlereagh."

above these things. This is the more just since Heine as a poet is eminently cosmopolitan. The note of provinciality is not in him. And this distinction belongs only to poets of the first class.

Notwithstanding, it is of great interest to study Heine in his relation of sympathy, his spiritual or racial touch with his own people. I have said that he shared deeply in the *Juden-Schmerz*, the great sorrow of Israel. "The history of the Jews," he tells us, "is tragical, and yet if one were to write about this tragedy, he would be laughed at. This is the most tragic of all."

Heine wrote much and variously on this subject, constantly recurring to it, now with awful pathos and again dissembling his own pain with bitter irony, as in his note on Shakespeare's Shylock:

"I, at least, a wandering dreamer of dreams, looked around me on the Rialto to see if I could find Shylock. I had something to tell him that would have pleased him—which was that his cousin, Monsieur de Shylock in Paris, had become the proudest baron in all Christendom, and had received from their Catholic Majesties the Order of Isabella, which was originally established to celebrate the expulsion of Jews and Moors from Spain. But I found him not in the Rialto, so I determined to look for my old acquaintance in the synagogue.

"Though I looked all around in the synagogue of Venice, I could nowhere see his face. And yet it seemed to me he must be there, praying more fervently than any of his fellow-believers with stormy, wild passion,—yea, with madness!—to the throne of

Jehovah, the severe divine Monarch. . . . I saw him not. But, toward evening, when, according to the belief of the Jews, the gates of Heaven are closed and no further prayer can enter, I heard a voice in which tears flowed as they were never wept from human eyes. There was a sobbing which might have moved a stone to pity—there were utterances of agony such as could only come from a heart which held shut within itself all the martyrdom that an utterly tormented race had endured for eighteen centuries. It was the death-rattle of a soul which, nearing its death, sinks to the ground before the gates of Heaven. And this voice seemed to be well known to me,—as if I had heard it long, long ago, when it wailed just as despairingly, ‘Jessica, my child!’ ”

Now for the other mood, and let us not forget that with Heine the mood of the moment is supreme. We have but to take what the gods give us and be thankful. Also the strange mingling of irony, truth, humor and pathos is the chief mark of our poet’s genius—the one thing in which he is least imitable.

“There lives at Hamburg, in a one-roomed lodging in the Baker’s Broad Walk, a man whose name is Moses Lump. All the week he goes about in the wind and rain, with his pack on his back, to earn his few shillings. But when on Friday night he comes home, he finds the candlestick with seven candles lighted, and the table covered with a fine, white cloth. And he puts away from him his pack and his cares, and he sits down to table with his

squinting wife and yet more squinting daughter, and eats fish with them—fish that has been dressed in beautiful white garlic sauce; says therewith the grandest psalms of King David; rejoices with his whole heart over the deliverance of the Children of Israel out of Egypt; rejoices, too, that all the wicked ones who have done hurt to the Children of Israel have ended by taking themselves off; that King Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Haman, Antiochus, Titus, and all such people are dead, while he, Moses Lump, is yet alive and eating fish with his wife and daughter. He contemplates with satisfaction his candles, which he on no account will snuff for himself. And I can tell you, if the candles burn a little dim, and the snuffers-woman, whose business it is to snuff them, is not at hand, and if Rothschild the Great were at that moment to come in—with his brokers, bill-discounters, agents and chief clerks with whom he conquers the world—and were to say, ‘Moses Lump, ask me what favor you will and it shall be granted,’—I am convinced Moses Lump would quietly answer, ‘Rothschild, snuff me those candles!’ And Rothschild the Great would exclaim, ‘If I were not Rothschild, I would be Moses Lump!’”

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Heine’s political sense was indeed as sane and shrewd as his wit was keen. He has given us no better example of it than the following: “An Englishman loves Freedom as he loves his lawfully wedded wife. He regards her as a possession and if he does not treat her with special tenderness, yet,

if need be, he knows how to defend her. A Frenchman loves Freedom as he does his chosen bride; he will commit a thousand follies for her sake. A German loves Freedom as he does his old grandmother. And yet, after all, no one can tell how things may turn out. The grumpy Englishman, in an ill temper with his wife, is capable some day of putting a rope around her neck. The inconsistent Frenchman may become unfaithful to his adored mistress and be seen fluttering about the Palais Royal after another. But the German will never quite abandon his old grandmother. He will always keep for her a nook by the chimney corner where she can tell her fairy tales to the listening children."

Save the Chinese, no people have excelled the Germans in attachment to the idea of kingship by divine right, with its related blessing of a hereditary aristocracy. It is still believed that such is the form of government most acceptable in the sight of Heaven, where once the socialists and republicans under Lucifer caused a serious insurrection, which was put down only after the greatest trouble by Michael, first of all legitimists. Hence the peculiar favor with which the good Lord is supposed to regard those earthly governments patterned upon the model established by Himself.

This was a favorite theme with our poet, who hated dulness and pretence, stupidity and intolerance wherever he found them, but most bitterly of all in the trappings of prescriptive authority. No stronger proof of German passivity could be adduced than

that it seems to have withstood even the poisoned shafts of Heine's satire and ridicule.

It is, however, not unusual to find the spirit of revolt most keenly alive under a general appearance of submission and compliance; so we need not doubt that there were hearts in Germany which eagerly treasured up Heine's burning words against the mediæval body-of-death under which the nation lay—alas! for the greater part, still lies.

Never did our poet preach the new gospel of democracy with keener effect than in the following story taken, as he says, out of the life of Charles V.*

"The poor Emperor was taken prisoner by his enemies, and thrown into a wretched prison. I think it was in the Tyrol. He sat alone there in all his wretchedness, forsaken by all his knights and his courtiers, and no one came to help him. I do not know if in those days he had the curd-white face with which Holbein represents him in his pictures. But that prominent underlip, the sign of a disdain for mankind, was then, undoubtedly, more protruding than in his pictures. He had good cause to despise the people who fluttered so devotedly around him in the sunshine of his good fortune, and who left him solitary in his obscurity and his misfortune. Suddenly the prison door opened, and a cloaked man entered, and when the cloak was thrown aside the King recognized his faithful Kunz von der Rosen, the court fool. This man brought him consolation and advice, and he was the court fool.

*A slip for Maximilian.

“‘Oh, German Fatherland! Oh, dear German people! I am thy Kunz von der Rosen. The man, whose peculiar office was to make the time pass for thee, and who only amused thee in thy good days, presses into thy prison, in the time of thy misfortune. Here, under my cloak, I bring thee thy strongest sceptre, thy beautiful crown. . . . Do you not recognize me, my Emperor? If I can not free thee, at least will I comfort thee, and thou shalt have some one near thee with whom thou canst speak of thy direful sorrows, one who loves thee, and whose best jokes and best blood are at thy service. For thou, my people, art the true Emperor, the rightful lord of the land. Thy will is sovereign, and far more legitimate than that purple vested *Tel est nôtre plaisir*, which invokes a divine right without any other warrant than the foolish prating of tonsured jugglers. Thy will, my people, is the only rightful source of all power. Though thou liest yet in chains, thy right will assert itself at length; the day of deliverance approaches, a new era begins. My emperor, the night is ended, and out there beyond the rosy glow of morning dawns.’

“‘Kunz von der Rosen, my fool, you deceive yourself. You perchance mistake a glittering axe for the sun, and the morning glow is nought but blood.’

“‘No, my Emperor, it is the sun, though it rises in the west. For six thousand years it has always risen in the east; it is now full time it should change its course.’

“ ‘Kunz von der Rosen, my fool, thou has lost the bells from off thy red cap, and it has now so strange an appearance, that red cap.’

“ ‘Alas, my Emperor, at the thought of my misfortunes I shook my head so furiously, that the fool’s bells have fallen from my cap; but it is none the worse therefor.’

“ ‘Kunz von der Rosen, my fool, what breaks and cracks out there?’

“ ‘Be still! It is the carpenter’s saw and axe, and the doors of your prison will soon be open, and you will be free, my Emperor.’

“ ‘Am I really Emperor? Alas, it is the fool who tells me so!’

“ ‘Oh, do not sigh, my dear master. The air of the prison renders you fearful; when you are reinstated in your power you will again feel the hardy Emperor-blood coursing through your veins; you will be proud as an emperor, and arrogant, and gracious, and smiling, and ungrateful as princes are.’

“ ‘Kunz von der Rosen, my fool, when I am once more free, what wilt thou do?’

“ ‘I will then sew new bells on my cap.’

“ ‘And how shall I recompense thy fidelity?’

“ ‘Ah! dear master, do not order me to be killed!’ ”

* * * *

In 1831 Heine took a long-meditated step and crossed the Rhine—the Jordan which, he said, separates the sacred Land of Freedom (France) from

the Land of the Philistines (Germany). Beyond the attraction which Paris offered as the center of art and taste, the poet was actuated by other reasons, sufficiently cogent, in leaving the fatherland. I have noted how his prose writings brought him under official censure. It was not at all unlikely that severer measures might be preparing for him. He had received a hint, he tells us, that there were irons in the fortress of Spandau which would be uncomfortable wearing in the winter. No oysters, of which he was fond, were obtainable there, and there were no fowl, except flies, which had a habit of falling into the soup, and thus making it more substantial. Moreover, the poet was strongly moved by the July revolution, in which Louis Philippe, the Citizen King, succeeded to the Bourbon, Charles the Tenth. The sun in Germany began to look to him like a Prussian cockade. "Oh, the grand week in Paris!" he exclaims. "The spirit of liberty which spread over Germany did, to be sure, sometimes overturn the night-lamps, so that the red hangings of some thrones were singed and the gold crowns grew hot under burning nightcaps. But the old catchpolls in the pay of the police soon brought out their fire-buckets, and they snuff about more watchfully than ever and forge stronger chains. And I notice that invisible prison walls, thicker than ever, are rising round the German people."

On the second day of May, 1831, he arrived in Paris. His reputation had preceded him, and gained for him the *entrée* to the first literary circles. Heine was then in his thirty-second year, in

the full vigor of health, and so handsome as to win from Théophile Gautier the title of the German Apollo. Among the notables who welcomed the poet to Paris were Meyerbeer, George Sand, Gautier, Michelet, Dumas, Sainte Beuve, Quinet, Gerard de Nerval, Ludwig Boerne, Schlegel and Humboldt. Heine's contentment in his new sphere, in the Capital of Intellect, far removed from the petty German censors, is best described by his own famous phrase to Ferdinand Hiller, the composer, returning to Germany. "If any of my friends ask about me," he said, "say I feel like a fish in water; or, rather, when one fish in the ocean asks another how he is feeling, he gets the answer, 'I feel like Heine in Paris.'"

Heine, a born man of letters, as Matthew Arnold calls him, at once entered upon the second and more important period of his literary career. His letters to German newspapers, his reviews and other prose writings, put him in possession of an assured income. There was, besides, an allowance from Uncle Salomon—not a munificent one, indeed, but still useful and acceptable. It is said the poet was also, for a considerable time, in receipt of a pension from the French Government, and the story lent color to some unworthy aspersions cast upon him by his own countrymen. The fact seems to have been that Heine was carried on the list of foreign refugees whom the French Government assisted, through motives of policy. That the poet never performed a sinister service nor one in any way impeaching his

integrity as a man and a patriot, has long since been made clear to his most invidious critics.

In the account which he drew up concerning his estrangement from Ludwig Boerne—his fellow-countryman, and a zealous, if intemperate, patriot—Heine repudiated the charges above noted. "Do you hold out from the grave an imploring hand?" he cries. "I give you mine without malice. See how white and clean it is! It has never been soiled by the clasp of the mob or the gold of the people's enemies."

True, as it is, that Heine lacked stableness of purpose, he at least never abjured his liberal creed. Belonging to the aristocracy of mind, he was yet a leader and a prophet in the great democratic movement. With all his admiration for Napoleon, he was wont to say that he followed him absolutely only up to the 18th Brumaire. Heine's political vision was marvelously keen and his deductions original and just. Scarcely any portion of his work is more interesting than the political reflections and observations injected into his "History of the Romantic School," his "Religion and Philosophy in Germany," and sprinkled over his miscellaneous writings.

With his protean humor and fatal facility of satire, it was only to be expected that, sooner or later, Heine would give mortal offence to most of his liberal friends, as well as many of his compatriots. The affair with Ludwig Boerne, which, after the apostasy, I would rather wipe out than any other passage in Heine's life—drew him into a duel.

There were other quarrels, hideously vulgar, and ah, how unworthy of the high-strung, sensitive poet! These are, however, only the shadows in the picture. A curious student may now, perhaps, by an effort, recall the names of the men who quarreled with Heine on the score of backsliding in his political or religious faith. No one can estimate the immense influence which his writings have had in favor of liberal ideas in Germany and throughout the world.



In the year 1841 Heine wrote to his sister: "On the 31st of August I was married to Mathilde Crescentia Mirat, with whom I have quarreled every day these six years." The poet's union with the amiable Frenchwoman contributed to the small sum of happiness reserved for his last years. A terrible and insidious disease, consumption of the spinal marrow, showed itself as early as 1845, in a partial paralysis which gradually extended over the whole system. Then in 1848 began for the stricken poet the tragedy of the mattress grave, and the crown of an unexampled agony was added to the supreme laurel of poesy. Even as early as 1846 Heine wrote to his friend, Heinrich Laube: "If you do not find me here—faubourg Poissonnière No. 41—please look for me in the cemetery of Montmartre—not in Père La Chaise, which is too noisy for me."

Our Heinrich was surely no saint, yet his awful sufferings brought to light in his character unsuspected resources of firmness, sweetness and resigna-

tion. His chief anxieties were, first, for his wife, that she should not be left by his death without a provision; and then, for his old mother in Germany, the "old woman by the Dammthor," that she should not learn of his terrible misfortune. His woeful state was, for some time, needlessly embittered by the heartless conduct of his cousin Carl, who refused to pay an allowance promised by Uncle Salomon, now dead, but which the latter had omitted to provide in his will. Finally Carl yielded the point, but he first made terms with the poet relative to the latter's treatment of the Heine family in his memoirs; and it was further agreed that the allowance should be continued to the poet's widow.

Dark as was Heine's lot, in those terrible last years, the solace of his genius remained to him. With death at his pillow and the sentient world of light and life and joy shut out from him, his genius, unconquered, yet rose to new heights—as if he would gather fresh laurels to be laid on his bier. "Like a dead man, the living poet was nailed in his coffin," writes Théophile Gautier, "but when we bent listening over him, we heard poetry ringing from under the pall."

But the poet himself is the best witness of his own agony. Listen:

"My body is so shrunken away that hardly anything but my voice is left, and my bed reminds me of the sounding grave of the enchanter Merlin in the Broceliande forest in Brittany, under the tall oaks whose tops rise like green flames into heaven. Ah, friend Merlin, I envy you those trees, with their

cool breezes, for no green leaf flutters over my mattress grave in Paris."

Again: "I am no more a Hellene of jovial life and portly person, laughing cheerfully down on dismal Nazarenes—only a poor death-sick Jew!"

But not dead yet, no, not dead! For he cries out with the courage of immortal mind—"Though I am sick unto death, my soul has not suffered mortal hurt. It is a drooping and an athirst, but not yet withered flower, which still has its roots firmly planted in the ground of truth and love."

And the terrible likeness he found for his affliction in the leper of the "Limburg Chronicle." Hear again: "In 1480, throughout all Germany, songs were sung and whistled that were sweeter and lovelier than any that were ever heard before in the German land. But, says the chronicle, a young priest who had the leprosy had written these songs, and had withdrawn himself from all the world into a desert. These lepers of the Middle Ages, thrust out from all human intercourse, wandered about, wrapped from head to foot, a hood over their faces, carrying a rattle, called a Lazarus bell, with which they gave warning of their approach, so that all might draw aside from the way. . . . Often, in my sad visions of the night, I think I see before me the poor priest of the 'Limburg Chronicle,' my brother in Apollo, and his suffering eyes gleam strangely from beneath his hood; but in a moment he glides away, and, like the echo of a dream, I hear the sharp tones of the Lazarus bell."

It is a strange picture, called up by the sufferings of the poet—his mind triumphing over the decay of his body—his genius marking new achievements—his mordant wit and terrible irony active to the last. The ruling passion, strong even in death, was never more signally illustrated. His last word is a jest—“God will pardon me; it is his trade!”

But there is a relief to the tragedy of the mattress-grave, which were else too painful to contemplate. The cheerfulness of the dying man, the amazing vigor of his mind, the undaunted bravery of his spirit—these may well detain us for a brief space before we turn away from that solemn scene.

To the doctor who asked him if he could whistle, using the French word which means also to hiss (*siffler*), the poet gasped, “Alas, no! not even a comedy of M. Scribe’s.” When Berlioz, the composer, came to see him, shortly before the end, the poet exclaimed, “What! a visitor! Berlioz was always original!” And the good-natured Mathilde, often made the sport of his playful humor, contented herself with saying placidly: “Very well, my dear, have your joke, but you know you can not do without me.”

Once his Nonotte, as he called her, went out for a drive, and was gone so long that the poet pretended his first thought was that she had eloped from her sick husband with some cunning Lothario. Then he sent the nurse to her room to see if Cocotte, her pet parrot, was there. Yes, indeed, Cocotte, was there, and his heart beat freely again. “For

without Cocotte," he adds, with a touch of sly malice, "the dear woman would never leave me."

Well, she never did leave him, and, so far as we know, she never dreamed of such a thing, great as was her burden. Poor Mathilde! My heart goes out in sympathy to her, who was so near the poet, and who is treated with such scant courtesy by the great man's biographers. I believe she suffered more than we know. She was not a literary woman, and she could not leave the world a memoir of that mattress-grave tragedy, as did another woman, whose presence at her husband's bedside brought him more comfort than it brought her. She could only retire, at odd times, when her care was not required by the sick man, and talk to her parrot, or, perhaps, cry softly to herself. . . .

But the end of that long martyrdom was drawing near. Now the poet writes, or dictates—for his sight is nearly gone and his paralyzed fingers can not guide the pen: "My body suffers much, but my soul is as placid as a lake, and sometimes the most beautiful sunrises and sunsets are reflected in it." He makes his will, his latest thought anxious for poor Mathilde: "Farewell, thou German fatherland—land of riddles and sorrows: farewell, you kindly French people, whom I have loved so much." Thus he fell asleep, February 17, 1856. The funeral was simple, without any religious ceremony, as the poet had desired. The mourners were Théophile Gautier, Alexandre Dumas the elder, Paul de St. Victor, and Mignet. Dumas wept; Gautier, seeing the

great casket and the shrunken corpse, recalled the poet's own lines:

Do you know why the coffin
So heavy and wide must be?
Because in it I laid my love,
And with it my misery!

The poet was buried in Montmartre cemetery, according to his wish. Over his grave is a simple stone, with the inscription, "Henri Heine." The mother who brought him into the world which he filled with his fame, survived him three years.

Heine, in his fine comparison of Goethe and Schiller, wrote: "Goethe's poems do not beget deeds as do Schiller's. Deeds are the children of the word and Goethe's fair words are childless. That is the curse of all that is the product of art alone."

Here is a profound truth by virtue of which Heine himself exercises a more vital influence than does the sovereign of German literature. Heine, indeed, more potently represents his time, its aspiration, its revolt against tradition and dogma and all cramping prescription. Hence Matthew Arnold calls him the paladin of the modern spirit. The poet truly describes himself as a son of the Revolution. "Poetry has always been with me only a sacred plaything," he says. "I have ever placed but slight value on poetic fame, and my future repute troubles me not at all. But if ye will do me honor, lay a sword upon my coffin lid, for I was a brave soldier in the war of the liberation of humanity!"

Doubtless it required more courage and self-sacrifice to live the life that Heine lived—no matter how often it fell below the mark—than to wear a gold chain and be chancellor at Weimar. It is a great distinction to be a great poet. Add to this the glory of leading and inspiring the onward march of humanity—of suffering also in that supreme cause—and the measure of earthly greatness is filled.

This crowning honor, I believe, can not fairly be refused to the memory of Heinrich Heine.



Dr. Maginn and Father Prout.

William Maginn.



AM to talk to you of two famous Irishmen who lived merrily and in their earthly course added much to the world's stock of enjoyment. We shall not, I trust, be the less interested in the story that, after making the world largely their debtor, these two died sadly enough, taking at last a tribute of tears from thousands of hearts which they had delighted with the frolic freedom of their genius. And, in truth, what moral is more trite than this—the merry man dropping at the end of the play his humorous mask and showing us his own tristful face behind the antic visage of Harlequin? Perhaps the poor mime was sad through it all—only the children are entirely deceived by the patches and paint.

In the change of literary fashions and the clamor of new voices, some courage may be required to attempt an hour's entertainment with two commonly neglected writers. I say neglected, although editions of their books are printed from time to time, and the audience of elect minds never fails them.

It is enough that the men with whom we have to deal have gained an honorable place in the literature of the last century. If you do not remark their books on every railway stand, or in the catalogue of every circulating library, you must not, therefore,

conclude that they have no warrant to speak to you. Nay, I make bold to observe that they require you to bring your best to them, and that one's best is not, perhaps, always worthy of their acceptance.

Still it remains true that the vogue of many more recent literary reputations, far less worthy on grounds of high merit, is not for the Doctor or the Padre, beloved though they be of an appreciative and attached audience. Whether indeed such a condition were desirable, offers a basis for argument, had we time and patience to go into it. Having long since attained that Nirvana which awaits the tired heart and brain, the Doctor and the Padre rest indifferent to the awards of gods and columns. Nor are they posthumously pursued by the literary syndicates—so their portion great or small of immortal fame is in no danger of being vulgarized. The syndicates may dissent, but I can see something to be envied in this.

O'Connell used to say that you could kick a better orator than himself out of any bush in Ireland. Dr. Maginn and Father Prout, on a similar principle, might be reckoned the two wittiest Irishmen of the last century, if wit were not so generally accredited to the race which claims them. They were contemporaries, though Prout lived quite into our own time and Maginn died twenty years before him. There was a strange resemblance in their mental gifts, their literary acquirements, even their mutual antipathies and prejudices. The one was almost the analogue of the other. Both were good Irishmen, yet both were strong Tories. The one

was a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, and, in spite of much that was uncanonical in his character, remained true to the ancient faith of his fathers. The other was as stout a Protestant as Doctor Johnson.

Maginn used to quote with half-serious approval the proposition of a certain Sir Joseph Yorke, to scuttle the Island of Sorrows and leave it under water for twenty-four hours, as an effectual cure for its political disorders. It may be observed that the Doctor seldom left himself under water for so long a period.

Prout was of the opinion that Tom Moore's Melodies had done more to bring about Catholic Emancipation than all the tremendous moral suasion of O'Connell, and he affected to hold the methods of the great agitator in abhorrence. I suspect his Toryism was only skin-deep, however,—not at all the robust article of Maginn—for we know that he (Prout) gloried in a Limerick ancestor. The politics of both men is a curious study, but it may not detain us, since we are chiefly concerned with their literary character. And here, as already suggested, the analogy between these two famous men is most striking. There is no great disparity between the productions of their genius. Nature almost seems to have struck them both from the same die. But let us begin with Maginn.

"Here, early to bed, lies kind William Maginn," wrote Lockhart, in 1842. I wish you to keep in mind that simple obituary penned by the noble son-

in-law of Walter Scott. "Kind William Maginn!" Yes, it was kind William Maginn who wrote: "Great and wise men have loved laughter. The vain, the ignorant and the uncivilized alone have dreaded or despised it. Let us imitate the wise where we may. Let our Christmas laugh echo till Valentine's day; our laugh of St. Valentine till the first of April; our April humor till May-day, and our merriment till midsummer. And so let us go on from holiday to holiday, philosophers in laughter, at least, till, at the end of our century, we die the death of old Democritus—cheerful, happy and contented, surrounded by many a friend, but without an enemy, and remembered principally because we have never either in life or in death, given pain for a moment to anyone that lived!"



Ireland is a very small country, to be sure, as a matter of square miles, though we have been obliged to hear so much of it; but it does seem amazing that so many famous and illustrious Irishmen should have to be credited to the city and county of Cork. A fair city is Cork, with one of the most beautiful sea-ways in the world leading to her doors. Alas! many of those who have loved her and owed to her their birth, have gone out oftener upon that shining track than they have returned. We shall hear presently of one who carried a wistful memory of her during years of exile in alien lands until at last it found expression in a song which has wreathed his name with hers in an unfading laurel.

Maginn and Father Prout were both born in this

delectable city of Cork. So was their friend, Mac-lise, the painter, the Alfred Croquis of *Fraser's Magazine*, and the worthy associate of Maginn in making the famous "Gallery of Literary Characters." Mac-lise is also memorable as the friend of William Makepeace Thackeray, greatest of all who sate in the brilliant circle of *Regina*.*

It would be easy, by the way, to draw up a catalogue of eminent Corkonians. There was "Honest Dick" Milliken, who wrote the celebrated "Groves of Blarney,"—now, alas! unsung, yet still potent to keep his honest name from oblivion. There was Barry, the painter, and Sheridan Knowles, the dramatist; there was Thomas Davis, heart of fire and tongue of gold, and poor Callanan, bard of Gougaune Barra. But, indeed, to rehearse the roll of Cork's illustrious sons might, in the end, become as tiresome as the catalogue of the ships in Homer. Modesty forbids my mentioning the name of a certain unimportant person (here peeping over your shoulder) who has the privilege of claiming Cork as his birthplace.

So William Maginn was born in Cork, the son of a schoolmaster who knew vastly more than Goldsmith's immortal pedagogue, for he taught the classics and other useful knowledge, and conducted withal a flourishing academy. But nothing about the academy flourished at the rate that young Maginn did in scholarship. The mere summary of his acquirements before he was eighteen is appalling. Maginn *père* knew his son was a prodigy, and with

**Fraser's Magazine*.

true Irish pride set himself to bring out all that was in him. You remember how Dr. Blimber used to "bring on" the young gentlemen under his tutelage. It probably wasn't a circumstance to the bringing on of young Maginn. He graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, before he was eighteen. He died under fifty, and while still a young man he had mastered the Latin, Greek, German, Hebrew, Sanscrit, Syriac, Irish or Gaelic, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, Turkish and Magyar languages. It is also certain, as we know from his works, that he learned soundly and well the English tongue, which is quite an accomplishment of itself. But there is, incredible as it may seem, no reason to doubt that his knowledge of all the languages named was exact and profound. His translations, serious and burlesque, sufficiently attest his mastery of the classic tongues. His essays on the plays and learning of Shakespeare show his command of the splendid resources of our English speech. Edward Kenealy, who has left us a touching memoir of Maginn, and who was himself a linguist of great attainments, in a letter to Sir Robert Peel characterized Maginn as "the most universal scholar of the age." And Lockhart wrote of him :

"Be a Bentley, if you can, but omit the brutality; rival Parr, eschewing all pomposity; outlinguist old Magliabecchi, and yet be a man of the world; emulate Swift in satire, but suffer not one squeeze of his *saeva indignatio* to eat your own heart; be and do all this—and the Doctor will no longer be unique."

Unhappily for Maginn's status in literature, this enormous versatility was purchased at the cost of more enduring performance. The Doctor did too many things well to achieve a surpassing success in any single line. As he himself would have said, with whimsical pedantry, the labor was too auto-schediastical. It has been said that men made good books out of his table talk—without crediting him, of course. The possessor of one talent is not seldom more fortunate than he who has ten. Maginn wrote the first of the famous *Noctes Ambrosianae* papers, and many of the succeeding series which through long years delighted the cultivated readers of the British Islands. They brought fame and fortune to *Blackwood's Magazine*, and more specifically, to John Wilson, better known under the pen-name of *Christopher North*. When Maginn's active brain was worn out and his generous heart stilled forever, the canny Scot forgot to mention the obligation.

Grievous as the fact is to all who wish that genius may receive its due, we may be sure that it would not have been very distressful to William Maginn. The carelessness with which he regarded the fate of his productions, may be paralleled only in the case of Shakespeare. He rarely gave the authority of his name to any of his writings, which he threw off with incredible ease and fertility. Yet if only the pencil sketches accompanying the "Gallery of Literary Characters" were to survive, they would insure the fame of Maginn as the most brilliant and audacious wit of his generation.

Not long ago, Mr. Saintsbury, the eminent English critic, paid a significant tribute to the merits of Dr. Maginn, in tracing the early work of Thackeray. Maginn was Thackeray's first editor. Many other notable literary men confessed the benefits of his kindly word and helping hand. Careless of his own fame and selfish interest, he was zealous for those of others. They say Thackeray satirized him in the character of *Captain Shandon*. I don't believe it. I prefer to believe, instead, that the great English writer was thinking rather of the erratic, brilliant Maginn whom he knew so well, than of Goldsmith, when he penned these words:

"Think of him, reckless, thriftless, vain if you like, but merciful, gentle, generous, full of love and pity. He passes out of our life and goes to render his account beyond it. . . . Think of the noble spirits that admired and deplored him. . . . his humor delighting us still. . . . his very weaknesses beloved and familiar."

There is a story that Thackeray, in his early period, long before he had himself caught the ear of the town, loaned a goodish sum of money to Maginn—which, of course, was never repaid—and that the circumstance aided materially in the dispersion of the young man's fortune. Many years afterward, when poor Maginn had passed away, Father Prout gave the true history of the affair to Blanchard Jerrold. Thackeray, he said, was eager to found a magazine, which should hold its own with the best. He wanted an editor and Prout told him William Maginn was his man. A meeting was brought

about at the Crown Head tavern in Drury Lane—Maginn was always the better for business after a lubrication. He stipulated for five hundred pounds, to be expended in preliminary operations—"clearing the decks," was the Doctor's idiom. The money was advanced, the new literary venture sent forth, handseled with all the resource and skill and brilliancy of Maginn. It lived just six months and bequeathed an invaluable experience to the future author of "Pendennis."

After all, pecuniary debts lie easier, it may be, than literary obligations among the tribe of Scriblerus. I suspect that *Barry Lyndon* has given a slight I. O. U. to *Ensign Morgan O'Doherty*.

Maginn in his most surprising feats of genius and scholarship must always remain "caviare to the general." It is not difficult to see that he could not have produced his incomparable burlesques in the classic languages by simply swallowing lexicons through a long course of years. You may have little Latin, but, with a small share of trouble, you can't miss the heroic effect of Maginn's rendering of the famous old English ballad of "Chevy Chase" into the tongue of Virgil. Who that has ever read it, can forget the opening lines?—

*Perseus ex Northumbria
Vovebat Diis iratis,
Venare inter dies tres,
In montibus Cheviatis;
Contemptis forti Douglasso
Et omnibus cognatis.*

Or this infinitely comic parody of what Matthew Arnold was so fond of calling the grand style?

O dies! dies! dies trux!
Sic finit cantus primus;
Si de venatu plura vis,
Plura narrare scimus.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

There is a well defined Age of Booze in the history of English letters and social life. From the middle of the Eighteenth century it persists well into the Nineteenth. I hasten to say that at no time has the great English nation been indifferent to strong drink. Men drank hard when William Maginn went up to London—they had drunk harder less than a generation before. Thackeray glances brilliantly at all this guzzling and profligacy in his lecture on the fourth George. Princes of the blood were not seldom as drunk as Wapping soldiers. Of course the nobility followed suit. The members of the honorable profession of the bar loved wine, we are told, as well as the wool-sack. Ladies of quality tippled and often had great need of their sedan chairs. *O tempora! O mores!* I wonder if all this be really changed in the present year of grace, or doth Belgravia remain as a tinkling cymbal? . . .

Poor Maginn drank far more than was good for him, on account of his delicate constitution and the fact that he was, like Horace, a Mercurial man. Charles Lamb, you remember, had the same weakness and wrote an essay, "The Confessions of a

Drunkard" which he afterward tried to explain away, but which I fear had more truth than poetry.

I say Maginn drank too much, but it would be unjust to paint him as the horrible literary example of his age. Other men of his time and company drank more—some men, you know, do this better than others—and yet contrived to escape reproach. The Homeric potations of Kit North and his friends are not so much matters of literature as they are matters of fact. Maginn wrote a table of drinking maxims which had a famous vogue in the clubs. Wine and wit are there, contrary to the adage, in equal proportions. He has done the trick for us in verse, too, and, remembering how many good men have had their moments of frailty since Father Noah discovered the vine, we shall thank him for his jolly song of

THE WINE-BIBBER'S GLORY.

Quo me Bacche rapis tui plenum?

—Horace.

If Horatius Flaccus made jolly old Bacchus
So often his favorite theme;
If in him it was classic to praise his old Massic
And Falernian to gulp in a stream;
If Falstaff's vagaries 'bout sack and canaries
Have pleased us again and again;
Shall we not make merry on Port, Claret or Sherry,
Madeira and sparkling Champagne?

First Port, the potation preferred by our nation
To all the small drink of the French;

'Tis the best standing liquor for layman or vicar,
The army, the navy, the bench;
'Tis strong and substantial,—believe me, no man
shall

Good port from my dining room send.
In your soup—after cheese—every way it will
please,

But most *tête-a-tête* with a friend.

Fair Sherry, Port's sister, for years they dismissed
her

To the kitchen to flavor the jellies;
There long she was banish'd and well nigh had van-
ish'd

To comfort the kitchen maids' bellies,—
Till his Majesty fixt, he thought Sherry when sixty
Years old like himself quite the thing:
So I think it but proper to fill a tip-topper
Of Sherry to drink to the King.

Though your delicate Claret by no means goes far, it
Is famed for its exquisite flavour;

'Tis a nice provocation to wise conversation,

Queer blarney or harmless palaver;

'Tis the bond of society—no inebriety

Follows a swig of the blue;

One may drink a whole ocean and ne'er feel commo-
tion

Or headache from Château Margoux.

But though Claret is pleasant to take for the pres-
ent,

On the stomach it sometimes feels cold;
So to keep it all clever and comfort your liver,
Take a glass of Madeira that's old.

When't has sailed for the Indies a cure for all wind
 'tis,
And colic 'twill put to the rout;
All doctors declare a good glass of Madeira
The best of all things for the gout.

Then Champagne! dear Champagne! oh, how gladly
 I drain a
Whole bottle of *Oeil de Perdrix*
To the eye of my charmer, to make my love warmer,
If cool that love ever could be.
I could toast her forever—but never, oh never
 Would I her dear name so profane;
So if e'er when I'm tipsy, it slips to my lips, I
 Wash it back to my heart with Champagne!

✱ ✱ ✱ ✱

The gentle art of literary "roasting" seems to have declined in virulence since the days of Maginn. He was easily the first practitioner of his time, and his slashing reviews were long the feature of *Fraser's Magazine*, and other periodicals. His editors have rescued a sufficient number of them to give us a formidable idea of the Doctor's prowess. The papers in which he pretended to expose the plagiarisms of Tom Moore are among the most learned and ingenious. Maginn was a Tory of the Tories, and it was not to be expected that he would bate of his edge for the warbler of Lansdowne House. Moore was greatly annoyed by the Doctor's roguish animadversions, but he did not proceed to the extreme of challenging him to mortal combat, as in the memorable passage with Jeffrey. I suspect Moore

feared the Doctor's terrible wit even more than his powder and ball.

As I have said, literary manners have somewhat improved since Maginn plied his merciless pen in *Fraser's* or *Bentley's*. His affair with Mr. Grantley Berkley sets a mark upon the time. It came near having as many elements of tragedy as sometimes attend the taking off of a Western or Southern editor in this glad free land. Mr. Grantley Berkley, the younger son of a noble house in whose escutcheon there was a very recent and ugly bar sinister, wrote and caused to be published a novel of indifferent merit. The chief offence of the author, to Maginn's mind, consisted in his expatiating upon the ancestral glories of the house of Berkley, in face of certain notorious facts. One cannot read Maginn's review of the book even at this distance of time without a shudder. Father Prout glanced over the copy and remarked to James Fraser, publisher of the magazine, "Jemmy, this means trouble." And it did.

A novelist of our day would accept such a roast as a splendid advertisement. Or he might defend himself anonymously and with a heroic show of virtue. Mr. Berkley's noble blood would brook no *amende* short of assault and battery. Accordingly, backed by his brother and a hired bruiser, he went after "satisfaction." Finding Fraser alone at the publishing office, the three set upon him and so grievously injured him that he lived but a short time afterward. He lived too long, however, to admit of a charge of murder or manslaughter. The

affair and its subsequent airing in the courts was the sensation of London. Before the trial was ended Dr. Maginn had a hostile meeting with the aggrieved author. Three shots were exchanged without effect. Fraser's assailants were fined in a small amount, and Maginn wrote a vigorous account of the whole affair, which, to a present-day reader, excels in curious interest the bulk of his works. It will always occupy a page in that pleasing history, so dear to Addison, of "Man and the Town."

Maginn had his bit of romance and a sad one enough it was. Some who have written upon him say it had much to do in confirming the habits of dissipation which helped him down the descent of Avernus. I have my doubts as to that, but at least the theory does no great violence to the Doctor's head and heart. His own idea, as we know, was that a man who would not go to the devil for a woman was not good for much. The lady in the case was Letitia Elizabeth Landon, an English poetess of the thirties, whose verses were once held in critical esteem, and whose initials, "L. E. L.," were potent to thrill our charming grandmothers in that far-off sentimental time. Miss Landon wrote and published more poetry than the Sweet Singer of Michigan, but she did not live long enough after marriage to take the world into her confidence. Thus her passion has a vestal note which is lacking to the later and more competent lucubrations of the American Sappho. But her marriage was a dreadful business to Maginn, who admired her prodigiously and, indeed, gave her a

chance of immortality which the lady's own works do not warrant, by inserting a laudatory notice of her in the famous "Gallery of Literary Characters."

Maginn was then able to make or unmake a literary reputation. The lady, who really rhymed well, was flattered by the great editor's praise. He called her the Tenth Muse and proved it with a show of poetic imagination which, could the lady have claimed as much, would have gone far to confirm her in the title. But however Maginn might admire and belaud her and set her up in the estimation of the literary world, he couldn't marry her, for the excellent reason that there was already a Mrs. Maginn, of whom we know no more. So the Tenth Muse, wearying at last of Platonics, went in bravely like every true daughter of Eve to have her illusions shattered. She married a Scotch captain with a furious temper, who took the poor Muse away with him to Cape Coast Castle in Africa, where he commanded. There she lived only a few months, and the circumstances of her death were so strange that it was long believed she had made away with herself to escape the violence of her husband.

And William Maginn, who had been going down for some time, but in an undecided way, so that his friends indulged the hope that he might think better of it and retrace his steps,—William Maginn, after the death of this woman, went on down hill like a man who knew his road and would follow it to the end.

We may not dwell on the close of Maginn's life, which was as gloomy as its meridian had been brilliant. As Moore says of a more famous Irishman, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, whom Maginn strongly resembled in his last evil fortune, he "passed too often the Rubicon of the cup." Dunn'd by bailiffs, dragged to the Fleet prison for debt, reduced to the meanest shifts to support existence—in reading the last sad chapter, one is reminded of the tragedy of Savage and that race of ill-fated men of genius in whose misfortunes Johnson shared and of whom Macaulay describes him as the last survivor. This melancholy distinction belongs rather to William Maginn. Neglected by the great party which he had served so ably and long with his pen, shattered in health by privation and disease,—he sank lower and lower. After much troubling comes the great peace. It came to poor William Maginn in the 48th year of his age, in the year 1842, at the town of Walton-on-Thames, to which he had retired from the great Babel he loved so well. Sad and untimely as was that death, and sordid as was the setting of the last scene of all, we may not look upon it without a solemn interest and pity. Nay, a beam of glory lighted up the last hours of the broken man of genius. The master passion strong even in death, the courage of immortal mind, strikes us mute in the presence of this tragedy. Lying with his beloved Homer open upon his breast and unconscious of the nearness of the end, he dictated to his faithful friend Kenealy a translation from the classic page. Thus, in a manner thrilling with high emo-

tion, the Silence came to him: and so, with a reverent thought, we may leave "kind William Maginn."

✱ ✱ ✱ ✱

Father Prout.

In the beautiful and well-beloved city of Cork, within sound of those bells whose music he has bidden us all to hear, was born Francis Sylvester Mahony, famous in the world of letters and dear to every Irish heart as Father Prout. Let us in the short space we may devote to him call often by that name which he has made immortal.

I have noted the neglect into which Maginn and Prout have fallen with regard to the great body of readers. It is, however, true that Prout's literary estate is in much better case than that of his friend and contemporary.

Since their publication, over a half century ago, the "Reliques" of Father Prout have steadily advanced in literary favor. The suffrages of all competent scholars award Prout the rank of a classic. His love of Horace, his exquisite and varied culture, the expression of his native genius, which has been defined as a "combination of the Teian lyre and Irish bagpipe, of the Ionian dialect and Cork brogue," the audacity and fertility of his wit,—all cohere in making Prout the delight of the cultivated reader. Another fortunate circumstance is, that he does not carry too much baggage for immortality. There he is for you, within the compass of a tidy book, like Horace himself, whom he has so helped us to love and understand. Ah, they were kindred

spirits, the little man of Rome and the little man of Cork—but we are to consider that later on.

Francis Mahony's vocation in life was early determined for him, as has been the laudable custom of pious Irish parents. Perhaps the reverence for the priesthood is not so marked in any other people. It must also be said that this fine sentiment has never stood in need of the amplest justification. The Irish priesthood have contributed no small share to the glory of the Catholic church, and every page of Irish history is illustrated with their heroism and sacrifice. Hence, the fond ambition to have "a priest in the family" has sanctified many a humble hearth. Doubtless it has had much to do in weaving the destiny of the ill-fated island. Leave it out, and the chequered story of Ireland is baffling in the extreme.

It might have been expected that a lad of such parts as young Mahony early displayed would have fulfilled the fond hope of his parents and become a credit to the Church. The wise Jesuits, his first masters, knew better. Trained in the perception of character and motive, reading all the secrets of the heart with wonderful subtlety, it was seldom they erred in tracing the bent of a mind which they had assisted to form. It is no slight testimony to their acuteness in divining character that they recognized in the young postulant for the priesthood the future satirist and that they combated from the first his decision to enter the sacred calling.

But they taught him well, and he never forgot the debt he owed them. Careless as he afterwards

became in scattering the barbed arrows of his wit, he never failed in affection and respect for the great order of Loyola under whose tutelage he had drunk at the founts of classic learning. One of the best works of his pen is a vindication of the Society of Jesus from the infamous charges hurled against it by ignorant prejudice or deliberate malice. The march of the Jesuits through Europe for two centuries he has likened to the retreat of Xenophon with his ten thousand. In a paragraph worthy of Macaulay, he describes the great Bosuet "coming forth from the College of Dijon, in Burgundy, to rear his mitred front at the court of a despot, and to fling the bolts of his tremendous oratory among a crowd of elegant voluptuaries." "They cradled the genius of Corneille," he exclaims. "Molière was the fruit of their classic guidance. Scarcely a name known to literature in the Seventeenth century which does not bear testimony to their prowess in the province of education." And, with a caustic freedom, which his wise preceptors would have deprecated, he scores the Franciscan Pope Clement XIV for his act in issuing the famous Bull of July, 1773, by which the great Society of Jesus was suppressed.

Young Mahony's probation was a long one and, as I have said, the end approved the wisdom of his masters. At 12 years of age he was sent to the Jesuit College of Saint Acheul, at Amiens, France; thence to the Parisian seminary of the Order, and still later to the country house at Montrouge. To the Jesuit College at Rome he went for philosophy

and theology, and, for a final test, he was packed off to the College of Clongowes, in his native country, which was under the charge of the same Order.

At this last-named institution, Mahony was made prefect and master of rhetoric. Whatever doubt there might be touching his vocation for the priesthood, there could exist none as to his attainments. After a brief but edifying season of grace, the young prefect, with some congenial spirits, took a day's outing. Potheen somehow figured in the diversions, and, as a result, all had to be carried on turf loads to the college at midnight. The reverend authorities were justly scandalized, though, I think, they might have made more allowance for the punch, the smoky devil in which all the papal bulls since St. Patrick might neither exorcise nor excommunicate. The leader of misrule was sent back to the continent, and spent two years more in Rome, disciplining his restless spirit, but (I fear much) forgetting to say *mea culpa* when the bright world opened, at rare intervals, its seduction before him.

At last Francis Sylvester Mahony obtained his desire, and, with much misgiving on the part of his spiritual fathers, he was ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic Church at Lucca. In due time he saw and repented his mistake, which cast a shadow over his whole after life. With a nature intolerant of restraint and a pride of intellect that knew no compromise, the humble and laborious station of a simple priest was not for Francis Mahony. A born man of letters, with the need of expression came the need of freedom. There was in

Mahony no tincture of the hypocrite. He refused to eat bread at the cost of his self-respect, and, turning aside from that which had been the cherished ambition of his early life, he took up manfully the hard portion of the literary worker.

But note this: He was never what is called an "unfrocked priest," a term of reproach perhaps the most poignant among the race from which he sprang. The act of secularization was voluntary. Nor, in his freest Bohemian moments, would he permit the slightest aspersion upon the priestly character. Though he felt himself spiritually without the temple, he clung with a strange pride to the mere empty name of that sacred calling which had cost him so many weary years of probation. *Sacerdos in aeternum ordinem Melchisedec*. And to the last he read his breviary as faithfully as he read his well-beloved Horace and Béranger.

There is a droll story that Rome once contemplated making a cardinal of Father Prout, as a suitable recognition of his eminent literary attainments. It is said that some members of the Sacred College got hold of Prout's polyglot version of a familiar Irish song and were so delighted with it that they instantly moved the Holy Father to confer the red hat upon an author so deserving. A little examination of the records spoiled the most unique proposition in ecclesiastical history. Father Prout's comment is reported to have been: "All roads, they say, lead to Rome, but would it not have been droll if I had got myself there through the 'Groves of Blarney'?"

The great Archbishop McHale once rebuked a censor of Prout with the remark: "The man who wrote the Prout Papers is an honor to his country." These famous essays, which form the corner-stone of Prout's literary reputation, were contributed to *Fraser's Magazine* for the year 1834. They have been happily described as a "mixture of Toryism, classicism, sarcasm and punch." Among scholarly readers the fame of Prout has steadily appreciated, and to-day the Prout Papers seem to occupy as secure a place as the Essays of Elia, which they far surpass in variety of wit and ingenious learning.

Father Prout was the friend of Dickens and of Thackeray. He contributed to *Bentley's Miscellany*, of which Dickens was editor, and from Italy he sent a congratulatory ode to Thackeray on the establishment of the *Cornhill Magazine*. Dr. Maginn and Father Prout had so many things in common, as well as an Irish temperament, that one looks for some trace of jealousy in their brilliant emulation. I am glad to say, as an Irishman, that there is not the least suggestion of an unworthy feeling between these famous men. Maginn it was who introduced Prout to the columns of *Fraser's* and gave him the place of honor during twelve successive issues of the magazine. There is not so much love wasted among the literary fraternity as to render nugatory the circumstance of this generous friendship. When we remember the quarrel between Thackeray and Dickens, which divided the British nation into two hostile camps, we may wonder the more at it.

Perhaps a falling out between the Doctor and the Padre would have been so terrific in its literary results—fancy the fulminations of that polyglot armory!—that both shrank from the encounter. At any rate, these tremendous wits, each a born fighter and springing from a race that never declines a fight, met, saluted, smiled and passed on their earthly pilgrimage.

Prout took far better care of his literary baggage than did poor Maginn, who wrote for the day and the hour, caring nothing for the future. Yet a simple song has been more effective in preserving the memory of Prout than the wittiest and most learned of his writings. Such is the spell of true sympathy, making the whole world kin. A wanderer for years in many lands, singing the songs of stranger peoples, he was equally at home on the banks of the Tiber, the Arno, the Seine and the Thames. Ah, it was to none of these that he poured out the love of his heart when he sang the song of the

“BELLS OF SHANDON.”

With deep affection
And recollection
I often think of
Those Shandon Bells
Whose sounds so wild would
In days of childhood
Fling round my cradle
Their magic spells:
On this I ponder
Where'er I wander,

And thus grow fonder
 Sweet Cork, of thee,
With thy bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
 Cathedral shrine;
While at a glib rate
Brass tongues would vibrate—
 But all their music
 Spoke nought like thine;
For memory dwelling
On each proud swelling
Of the belfry knelling
 Its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shannon
Sound far more grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

I've heard bells tolling
 Old "Adrian's Mole" in,
Their thunder rolling
 From the Vatican;
And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
 In the gorgeous turrets
 Of Notre Dame;
But thy sounds were sweeter

Than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber
 Pealing solemnly :
O the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow,
While on tower and Kiosk, O!
 In Saint Sophia
 The Turkman gets,
And loud in air
Calls men to prayer
 From the tapering summit
 Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant 'em,
But there's an anthem
 More dear to me ;
'Tis the bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the river Lee.

* * * *

Prout's habit of "upsetting things into English," from the modern as well as the classic languages, has made the world his debtor and greatly enriched his literary legacy. Excellent as are his translations from Béranger, Hugo and the Italian poets, it is to his renderings from Horace that we must award the palm. I have already noted his keen

sympathy with the most charming and immortally young of classic writers. Something of the same fine touch is visible in Maginn's Homeric ballads, and perhaps these are to be preferred for a rude vigor and fidelity to the original. You do not always get what you expect from the roguish Father Prout. The surprise of his wit is as captivating and unexpected as the famous Killarney echo:

"How do you do, Paddy Blake?"

"Pretty well, I thank you."

Nevertheless, of the many hands that have labored at Horace—alas! the labor is too often manifest—the most deft and skillful, I believe, was the hand of Prout. The felicity of his verse is no less admirable than the sureness of his interpretation, and the occasional familiarity which he takes with the classic text only gives a zest to the reading. I should add that the prose essays in which these Horatian renderings are imbedded seem to me among the best of their kind.

Mr. Andrew Lang, who can seldom resist the temptation to say a smart thing,—an indulgence which may easily be pardoned to a North Briton,—remarks that Doctor Maginn in his translations from the Greek does not scruple to make Homer dance an Irish jig. Whatever truth or point may lie in this observation, it is not to be gainsaid that Prout's paraphrases of Horace are the better for their Milesian flavor. Indeed, they have the somewhat paradoxical merit of being at once genuinely classical and unmistakably Irish. However, when

they are most Irish, it may be suspected that the Padre is but having his "game" with us. That he could, when he cared, translate both worthily and powerfully,—like a scholar and a poet,—is sufficiently attested by his unsurpassed rendering of Ode II., Lib., 1. Such of my readers as are not acquainted with the original will thank me for laying this fine version before them,—unquestionably the *tour de force* of all Horatian translations.

ODE II.

Jam satis terris nivis atque dirae Grandinis, etc.

Since Jove decreed in storm to vent
The winter of his discontent,
Thundering o'er Rome impenitent
 With red right hand,
The flood-gates of the firmament
 Have drenched the land.

Terror hath seized the minds of men,
Who deemed the days had come again
When Proteus led, up mount and glen,
 And verdant lawn,
Of teeming ocean's darksome den,
 The monstrous spawn.

When Pyrrha saw the ringdove's nest
Harbor a strange unbidden guest,
And by the deluge dispossesst
 Of glade and grove,
Deer down the tide with antler'd crest
 Affrighted drove.

We saw the yellow Tiber, sped
Back to his Tuscan fountain-head,
O'erwhelm the sacred and the dead
 In one fell doom,
And Vesta's pile in ruins spread,
 And Numa's tomb.

* * * *

Whom can our country call to aid?
Where must the patriot's vow be paid?
With orisons shall vestal maid
 Fatigue the skies?
Or will not Vesta's frown upbraid
 Her votaries?

Augur Apollo! shall we kneel
To thee, and for our commonweal
With humbled consciousness appeal?
 Oh, quell the storm!
Come, though a silver vapor veil
 Thy radiant form!

Will Venus from Mount Eryx stoop
And to our succor hie with troop
Of laughing Graces, and a group
 Of cupids round her?
Or comest thou with wild war-whoop,
 Dread Mars! our FOUNDER?

Whose voice so long bade peace avaunt,
Whose war-dogs still for slaughter pant,
The tented field thy chosen haunt,
 Thy child, the ROMAN,
Fierce legioner, whose visage gaunt
 Scowls on the foeman.

Or hath young HERMES, MAIA'S son,
The graceful guise and form put on
Of thee, AUGUSTUS? and begun
 (Celestial stranger!)
To wear the name which THOU hast won—
 “CAESAR'S AVENGER?”

Blest be the days of thy sojourn,
Distant the hour when ROME shall mourn
The fatal sight of thy return
 To Heaven again;
Forced by a guilty age to spurn
 The haunts of men.

Rather remain, beloved, adored,
Since ROME, reliant on thy sword,
To thee of JULIUS hath restored
 The rich reversion:
Baffle ASSYRIA'S hovering horde,
 And smite the PERSIAN!

Now, let us take,—and with this selection we
must be perforce content,—the most charming song
of all classical antiquity, the famous Ode for Lalage,
which Father Prout has rendered with inimitable
grace and fidelity.

ODE XXII.

Integer vitæ scelerisque purus.

Aristius! if thou canst secure
A conscience calm, with morals pure,
Look upward for defence! abjure
 All meaner craft—
The bow and arrow of the Moor,
 And poisoned shaft.

What tho' thy perilous path lie traced
O'er burning Afric's boundless waste,
Of rugged Caucasus the guest,
Or doomed to travel
Where fabulous rivers of the East
Their course unravel!

Under my Sabine woodland shade,
Musing upon my Grecian maid,
Unconsciously of late I strayed
Through glen and meadow,
When lo! a ravenous wolf, afraid,
Fled from my shadow.

No monster of such magnitude
Lurks in the depth of Daunia's wood,
Or roams through Lybia unsubdued,
The land to curse—
Land of a fearful lion-brood
The withered nurse.

Waft me away to deserts wild,
Where vegetation never smiled,
Where sunshine never once beguiled
The dreary day,
But winters upon winters piled
For aye delay :

Place me beneath the torrid zone
Where man to dwell was never known,
I'd cherish still one thought alone,
Maid of my choice!
The smile of thy sweet lip—the tone
Of thy sweet voice!

Blanchard Jerrold has described the author of the Prout papers as of a race now extinct, "like the old breed of wolf-dogs." It is at least certain that the pattern of his wit appears to have been lost. "An odd, uncomfortable little man," says Jerrold elsewhere, "with a roguish Hibernian mouth and grey, piercing eyes." That is also a good bit of description, showing the free touch of a contemporary, which pictures for us the "short, spare man, stooping as he went, with the right arm clasped in the left hand behind him; a sharp face—a mocking lip and an ecclesiastical garb of slovenly appearance. Such was the old Fraserian," adds the writer, "who would laugh outright at times, quite unconscious of bystanders, as he slouched toward Temple Bar."

Prout's letters from Italy, contributed to the London Daily News during the brief period of Dickens' editorship, have, as we might naturally expect, rather a literary than a journalistic value. Nevertheless they are worthy documents of the time, and the Padre shows himself no Tory in recording the progress of Italian liberation. Meantime, Ireland was struggling along in the old way (which has not yet been entirely changed for a better), and Prout evinced that his sympathies were not with a majority of his own countrymen by inditing a fierce lampoon upon O'Connell. Swift himself never dipped his pen deeper in gall than did Prout when he wrote the vitriolic stanzas of the "Lay of Lazarus." Doubtless it was inspired by honest feeling; but, as an Irishman, he might have spared adding

to his country's shame. To this it may be cynically rejoined that, as an Irishman, he couldn't help doing it.

Much has been written on the subject of Prout's residence in Paris, where, during the later years of his life, he was a marked figure. Speaking the French language perfectly, he came to be regarded by the Parisians as one of their own notables. I need not here remark that there was a truly Gallic lightness in his wit, which has induced one of his biographers to describe his mental make-up as a compound of Rabelais and Voltaire. It is certain that he took kindly to the gay Parisians, whose love of novelty and child-like enthusiasms enchanted him. Among them he passed his closing years happily enough, earning, with his pen, as correspondent for the *London News* or *Globe* sufficient for his needs. He had his lodging, and a poor one enough, in the Rue des Moulins, running out of Thackeray's famous "New Street of the Little Fields," forever associated with the unctuous ballad of the "Bouillabaisse." Here sometimes the solitary little man received the few whom he admitted to the near circle of his friendship. Ah, what would not one give to have made one of a group about the chair of him who created the *Rev. Andrew Prout*, the lone incumbent of Watergrasshill, in the delectable county of Cork; the *Rev. Father Magrath*, elegiac poet, and the *Rev. Father Matt Horogan*, of Blarney! When the wine flowed, and the little man, sure of the sympathy of his audience, and justly proud of his fame (*non omnis moriar*)

poured forth the treasures of his learning and fancy, mingled with the lightnings of that wit which scathed wherever it glanced—what a privilege then to sit within the friendly beam of his eye, glass to glass with the decoctor of immortal punch, the wizard of many a night's enchantment! Ah, kindly reader, let us not forget that he lives and bids us ever to that favored audience.

Thackeray, in his Parisian visits, never failed to look up his old mentor of *Fraser's*. Like Prout, the author of "Vanity Fair" had served his turn as Paris correspondent for one or other of the London dailies, and well he knew the life with its gay Bohemianism, its ill-regulated bounty and ever-recurring short commons. His long and faithful friendship with Prout, who was often trying with his friends, bears out the truth of those fine lines in which Tom Taylor repelled the charge of cynicism directed at the historian of Esmond. Thackeray had written a book about Paris which the Padre pronounced vile, and, indeed, it can hardly be reckoned among the masterpieces of the great author. Sometimes, as often chanced with Prout, no matter how distinguished his company, a testy habit which grew upon him with age, would break out and the wit would come dangerously near to rudeness. With all his fine scholarship, Prout (to turn his own phrase against himself) too plainly revealed the "potato seasoned with Attic salt." Jerrold employs a less delicate metaphor in remarking upon the social errancies of Father Prout. "Prout, in his convivial moments," he says—and I should not

quote this if he had not elsewhere written nobly and appreciatively of our author—"reminds one more of Cork than of Rome." We hear of the Padre and the creator of *Colonel Newcome* hurling Latin ob-jurgatives at each other on an evening when Prout had mixed too often his favorite concoction of cognac, lemon and sugar. In such a learned battle the Charterhouse boy would scarcely be a match for the cunning pupil of the Jesuits.

Taking a modest liberty with this legend, we may conceive the Padre softening again, what with the soothing influence of the "element" and the honor of such comradeship, and, at an hour which shall be nameless, insisting upon seeing his great friend home to his lodging hard by in the Place Vendôme. So, there they go at last, the big man and the small—a sight worth seeing, you'll grant me—somewhat deviously to be sure, but well enough for all that—down the memorable "Street of the Little Fields." One of the things that make me love Thackeray is his kind and steady friendship for the gifted Irishman, so caustic and sensitive, yet with his own heart filled with a great loneliness.

Now the gossips have much to say about the doings of famous men, so we learn from more than one source that less celebrated guests than William Makepeace Thackeray were favored with an unpleasantly near view of the Padre's infirmity and carried away an intensely realized sense of the Proutian sarcasm. But it seems the entertainment was well worth the price, for few but pleasing

records remain of those *noctes coenaeaque deum* in the Rue des Moulins.

Here, near the famous "Street of the Little Fields," the solitary little man died, in the month of May, 1866. The date seems strangely recent, for we naturally associate with him the early thirties, the period of the Prout papers. A priest of that faith to which, in his heart of hearts, he had never been recreant, knelt at his bedside and consoled his last moments. And the good Abbé Rogerson tells us: "He was as a child wearied and worn out after a day's wandering: when it had been lost and was found; when it had hungered and was fed again."

For many years he had lived among the kindly French people, whom he loved as the poet Heine loved them. But on his death Cork claimed the ashes of her famous son. How like the end was, after all, to the beginning! For he lies at rest on the bank of that pleasant river whose murmur mingled with his childish dreams; under the shadow of the solemn spire, where the bells of Shandon ring down their benediction upon him.



Guy De Maupassant.



THE recent publication, in French, of some posthumous fragments of Guy de Maupassant's is not without a mournful interest for the admirers of that singularly gifted and unfortunate genius. And this is the best word that can be said for the enterprise of Maupassant's editors and publishers. Their too obvious motive is to make capital out of the morbid curiosity which the fate of this writer has evoked—a curiosity that seeks to pursue him beyond the grave. The editors have much to say as to the importance of disclosing the artistic processes of so great a writer. It is a specious plea, but the true lover of Maupassant will do wisely to avoid these fragments, the declared purpose of which is to show him the secrets of the Master's workshop.

I have read these things and I am unfeignedly sorry for it. One who wishes to love his mistress should not inquire too anxiously into the details of her toilet. The artistic motive was so dominant in Maupassant's work—the sole god indeed of his idolatry—that one might conceive such a publication inflicting upon him the pangs of a second death.

And all that we should know of Maupassant's "artistic processes" he had himself told us in the famous preface to *Pierre et Jean*, written at the height of his powers. It may be worth while to re-

call briefly the guiding rules of Maupassant's fine art, for the benefit of those who regard good writing as an easeful occupation.

* * * *

People who read Maupassant in the current translations usually think of him as a man who had a perverted talent for writing indecent stories and whose own personal immoralities brought upon him a judgment in the shape of paresis and an untimely death. The latter part of this view is probably well founded, though the physiologist might have something to say in the way of rebuttal or, at least, qualification. The matter of heredity would have to be taken into account; it being clear that a man is often punished in his venial sins for the graver transgressions of an ancestor who had dodged the reckoning in his own person.

Maupassant, it must be allowed, was an immoral man in his relations with women—perhaps not more so than many a man who leaves the penalty of his vices to a future generation.

As an artist, however, Maupassant has the highest claims to our respect, and we must combat the ignorant English idea that he was merely a writer of indecent stories. Whatever we may think of his choice of subjects, we shall not be able to dispute his literary pre-eminence. For example, we are always comparing the adjective "great," as between Mr. Kipling and some one else, usually to some one else's disparagement. Well, Maupassant was nearly always a greater artist than Kipling, though his view of life was neither so many-sided nor so whole-

some as the Englishman's. It must in truth be admitted that, literary ethics apart, the body of Maupassant's work is marked by the note of what we are now calling degeneracy. This, however, does not impair its value as a human document, or as a piece of consummate artistry. Nothing could more sharply accentuate the note of degeneracy in Maupassant's work than the little story of "Paul's Mistress" (*La Femme de Paul*) in the volume—untranslated, so far as I know—bearing the title *La Maison Tellier*. Yet, revolting as is the *motif* of the story, so powerfully and graphically is it told, so terribly convincing the picture of moral infamy it draws, that *La Femme de Paul* is raised by sheer art to the dignity of a classic. So at the end its unspeakable revelation offends the literary appreciation no more than does Horace's frankness in charging his old mistress with *libido equarum*. Now as the schoolmen have placed the charming lines to Lydia in the hands of the "ingenuous youth" of all nations, it would seem that, in the last result, the question of art is superior to the question of morals.

Few English writers have satisfied the demands of the artistic conscience as rigorously as did Maupassant. In the preface to *Pierre et Jean*, already cited, he says: "After so many masters of nature so varied, of genius so manifold, what remains to do, which has not been done, what remains to say, which has not been said? Who can boast, among us, of having written a page, a phrase, which is not already, almost the same, to be found elsewhere?" Now the man who seeks only to amuse his public,

continues Maupassant, by means already known and familiar, writes with confidence, his work being intended for the ignorant and idle crowd. But—and here is a truth, oh ye professors of literature!—those upon whom weigh all the past cycles of literature, those whom nothing satisfies, whom everything disgusts, because they dream better, to whom everything seems already deflowered, whose work gives them always the impression of a labor useless and common—they arrive at length to judge the literary art as a thing unseizable and mysterious, which even the greatest masters have scarcely unveiled. What remains then, he asks, for us who are simply conscientious and persevering workers? Why, we can maintain our struggle against invincible discouragement only by continuous effort—*par la continuité de l'effort*.

Let the young English literary aspirant read the story of Maupassant's seven years' apprenticeship to Flaubert—it will be worth more to him than the learned lucubrations of Prof. Barrett Wendell or many volumes of Kipling. "I know not," said the master to his disciple at their first meeting, "whether you have talent. What you have shown me proves a certain intelligence. But do not forget this, young man, that genius, according to Buffon, is only a long patience." From the author of *Madame Bovary*, Maupassant derived the chief canon of his artistic faith and practice, which may profitably be set down here:

"Whatever may be the thing one wishes to say, there is only one phrase to express it, only one verb

to animate it, and only one adjective to qualify it. One must seek then until one find *this phrase, this verb and this adjective*; and one must never be content with less, never have recourse to even happy frauds (*supercheries*) or clowneries of language, in order to avoid the difficulty."

The literal observance of this rule made a greater artist of the disciple than of the master. It gave Maupassant an almost unique distinction in an epoch and a nation peculiarly fertile in great writers. He was, and is, the unchallenged master of the *conte* or short story. In English we have no one to compare with him except Edgar Poe and Rudyard Kipling, both of whom he outclasses by virtue of pure artistry. The Frenchman owes his superiority not merely to the perfection of the phrase, but to the variety of his invention and his abnormal power of making the reader partake of his impressions. Poe studiously cultivated the horrible, but in tales of this order he achieved an unquestioned artistic success only in the *Cask of Amontillado*. I should like to see what Maupassant would have done with this story, had it come fresh to his hand. Yet he has a score of such, if not so dramatic in conception as Poe's masterpiece, certainly less peccable in other artistic respects. *L'Apparition* is the most convincing ghost story ever written; Corsican revenge has never been depicted so briefly and powerfully as in his tale of the old woman's vendetta; *Pierre et Jean* is a triumph of art applied to the psychology of moral guilt. *La Petite Roque* is as terribly distinctive a success—we can easily im-

agine how Poe's twiddling detective instinct would have spoiled these stories for him; *Allouma* is the last word of a sensualism that is as flagrantly frank as it is splendidly poetical; *L'Héritage* in its politely suppressed irony and demure analysis of motive, rivals Balzac's veritistic etching of Parisian manners.

But what shall I say of *Bel-Ami*, the perfect pink of cynical scoundrelism, with the profoundly immoral, yet strictly true, lesson of the wicked hero's success? Oh, Sandford and Merton! what a contrast is here to the smug hypocrisy of the British Philistia! The man who wrote this book is surely damned—but if you do not admire it, pudent reader, you shall not escape artistic damnation. Talk of the satire of “Vanity Fair”—a book without a man in it! Look, I pray you, at the victorious *Monsieur Georges Duroy*—pardon! I should say, *Du Roy*—see how this plenary profligate makes his smiling way; conquering and deserting women at every turn; putting always money in his purse; guilty of everything except a blush of shame or a pang of remorse. What “green probationers in mischief” he makes your stock literary villains appear! The fellow is irresistible, too; has such an air that the more women he conquers, the more pursue him, ladies of approved and matronly virtue as well as *flaneuses* of the *pavé*. How grandly he goes on from success to success, until the church itself puts the capstone on his triumphal career and *le beau monde* of Paris acclaims his crowning rascality!

If the true victory of the artist be to have made

himself unforgettable in his work, then we may well pause at the name of De Maupassant. The copy of life which he has given us is one of unique interest, —terrible, fascinating, yet repellent. No writer moves us to keener curiosity regarding his mental processes or the formative influences which went to the making of his style and talent. For his rare and sinister distinction he paid, as we know, a fearful price—the man sacrificed himself in the artist. This would have appeared to Maupassant a perfectly logical act, involving neither heroism nor madness, since he held to no commandments save those of Art.

The artistic value of that poignant sacrifice, the literary value of that deeply etched transcript of life, remains and will remain. Tolstoy characterizes Maupassant as the most powerful of modern French writers of fiction. There is, by the way, between these two masters, otherwise so strongly contrasted, a great kinship in point of artistic methods. Maupassant is perhaps the only Frenchman who could conceivably have written *Ivan Ilytch*, that most pitiless yet authentic study of disease and death. Perhaps, had Maupassant lived to his full maturity—we must not forget that he died a young man—he would have come, like Tolstoy, to see life with a less morbid and troubled vision. He perished to the strains of that *Kreutzer Sonata* which the Russian has long survived and which it is now difficult to associate with his name. . . .

I have cited from memory only a few of the more famous *contes*—there are a dozen volumes of them,

not including the novels and other literary efforts. An immense quantity of the most strenuously artistic production; nothing bad or inept, at least in the English degree, shall you find in all these books. Maupassant burned the essays made during his long apprenticeship to Flaubert. The French people have a rigorous artistic sense and do not take kindly to the English practice of collecting the first amateurish effusions of their authors; they wait until the bird has learned to sing.

If the fruits of Maupassant's devotion to his beloved art were less real and apparent, one might take more seriously the legend that imputes to him an exclusive cult of lubricity. The sins of the artist are always exaggerated. In the case of Maupassant, exaggeration was the easier that the artist belonged to a race which is remarkable neither for continence nor discretion. It is true he confessed that "women were his only vice"; but, mindful of his eighteen or twenty volumes and his premature death, we can allow him a larger measure of charity than he claims. This much is certain—Maupassant was *not* his own most celebrated hero, as Byron liked to have people think *he* was his own *Don Juan*. Perhaps the creator of *Georges Duroy* would have relished the rôle himself,—if there were not books to write and, especially, if Flaubert had not laid on him so inflexible a rule of art! I suspect that the most tragic phase of Maupassant's life-tragedy consists in the fearful penalty he paid for an indulgence which is not so unusual as the world tries to make itself believe.

A Lost Poet,



O almost every man blessed or cursed with the instinct of self-expression—blessed in so far as the instinct is gratified, cursed in so far as it is baulked and frustrated—there comes a time, the heyday of youth being past, when the vanity of his hope presses upon him with a cruel insistence. Even the successful artist is not exempt from this trial—we know how it embittered the last days of Robert Louis Stevenson, in spite of every testimony of esteem, every suffrage of recognition that an applauding world could shower upon him. How grievous, then, must it be in the case of a man who has but merely demonstrated the artistic temperament by such slight works as are commonly accepted only as an earnest of riper and better performance! It is then that such a man, having neither secured nor deserved from the world that sustaining grace of public approval which is called success, begins to see with fatal clearness the *via dolorosa* of the artistic spirit stretching away before his lamentable vision, and ever dropping lower unto the sad twilight of age. Oh, the bitterness of that first foretaste of inevitable defeat! No sentence of the world, however severe, could affect his courage like this, for, alas! this comes from within—the man is judged by that inner self from whose decrees there is no appeal.

Not so had he promised himself in his first sanguine elation at hearing the poet's voice within his breast; nor can he endure to look forward to an old age lacking, what must be for him, its chief honor and garland:

*Latœ, dones et—precor—integra
Cum mente nec turpem senectam
Degere nec cithara carentem!*

Alas! what hope is there for him of an old age rejoiced with the lyre, since now, ere youth be yet entirely past, he is tasting that death of the spirit which foretokens decay and eternal silence? This in truth, is the supreme agony of such a mind—worse, far worse, than a hundred deaths of the body: yea, worse than the “second death” of Christian reprobation. To pass away in the course of nature were nothing; a thousand generations preach the trite moral of flesh that is reaped like grass—any fool's grinning skull will make a jest of this brief-lived humanity. But to feel now, when it is too late, that he had a voice and did not speak; that he forfeited the most precious of all birth-rights; that he *was* a poet—yes, by God!—and yet failed to make good his divine title, and must now forever remain silent, losing his place in the immortal company of those who can not die from out the grateful memory of men—oh, what a thought is this for a man to bear with him to his grave!

But the world, incredulous of such a soul, is ready to cry out upon the recreant: Why, if he had a true voice, did he not speak—nay, how could he

help speaking? Who was there to bid him be silent? Of marvelous worth, truly, was this poem of his, always seeking form and melody in his brain, which could never get itself written—this message always rising to his lips, which could never get itself spoken!

Let all the accidents of time and fate plead for him. Think you that none was deemed worthy in the Olympic strife save him who barely snatched the victor's wreath?

What of the many agonists, nameless now forever, who lost the prize, yet made the victor earn his triumph dear? Only less than his was their skill, their strength, their endurance—nay, it may well be that in all things they stood equal to him, but the strumpet Fortune turned the scale. Even as he, had they prepared for the stern trial, with labor and sweat and vigil; and victors they stood in their own high hope until the last decisive moment. Hail to the vanquished!

Deeper, less remediable grief than was theirs who lost the olive crown, is the portion of the disfranchised poet. And though most ills of body and soul now freely render themselves to the scalpel of the surgeon or the probe of the psychologist, not easily shall you approach this wounded spirit, stricken of the gods themselves for the sin of recreancy to their high gift.

† † † †

Yet have I known such a poet, by a strange privilege, and without the least treason, I am permitted to write his fateful story here. In doing so I betray

no living confidence, for the man, though he still breathes the vital air, is as no longer of this earth, having lost that which was the true sweetness and motive of his being. Reluctantly enough I venture to look into the soul of this unfortunate.

The god in his bosom is dead. The burning hopes of his ardent youth, when the night was all too short for its dreams of glory, have fallen back upon his heart in cold and bitter ashes. Alas, how the years have cheated him! Always he was putting off the clamant voice within his breast until he should have gathered more knowledge of his art—should have become wiser, stronger, purer. Life detained him from his appointed task with its manifold surprises. "Wait!" it said; "thou dost not yet know me well enough to write of me. Abide still a little longer, and no poet will have learned so much." Then was he taken in the sweet coil of young passion, and his nights were turned to ecstasy, his days to waking dreams; so that the beauty of a woman's white body seemed to him the only poem betwixt the heaven and the earth. And this happened in the first City of Desire.

Long was he held by this strong toil, but at last, shamed by the accusation of his pure early dream, he broke the guilty fetter and was again free. But not yet to write: not yet. For he said, "Alas! I have done hurt to my soul and until her peace shall be restored I am unworthy the sacred name of poet."

Then, after a long season of self-torment, resisting bravely the phantoms of his late evil experience in the first City of Desire, yet knowing himself the

weaker for every victory, he at last set himself to write. But not yet was it to be, for a better Love came and took the pen from his hand saying: "Thou hast learned all too dearly what is evil in love. Now shalt thou learn what is good; and then indeed mayst thou prove thyself a poet."

So he married this better Love, even in the way of men, though not, if he had wiser known, in the way of poets. And much joy, for a season, was his, and the ghosts of bad delights fell away and ceased to reproach or entice him. But, ere long, when he sought to take up the pen, he found that this better Love was implacably jealous of the poet in his breast. "Look at me!" she cried. "Am I not more desirable than any fiction of thy brain? Is it for this I am beautiful,—nay, is it for this I gave myself to thee, that thou shouldst leave me for thy thoughts, or that even when present, thou shouldst not see me for the working of thy fancy?"

And then would she weep till the poor, distracted poet would take her to his heart, learning how much easier it is to comfort a loving woman than to write an immortal poem.

Thus, again, the pen was laid aside, and the poor poet was, perforce, content to read the poems of other poets to his wife—which she graciously permitted—instead of writing any of his own. And the neighbors called him a model husband, for a literary man; all the time wondering when he would produce his great work.

So the years passed, each in its flight vainly challenging him; and children came, adding to his

burden of care, and forcing him to double-lock the door of that secret chamber of his soul, where he still kept his white dream of poesy. At long intervals, however, he went in there stealthily, drawing the bolts with fearful precaution, lest the wife of his bosom should hear him; and often he came from thence weeping.

But at length the ardor of his wife's love for him was appeased, or it was divided between him and their children; so that one day she cried to him in shrill reproach: "Did I not marry a poet long ago, and why hast thou made nothing of thy gifts? Can not a man be a poet and yet love his wife? Can not he get works of his mind as well as lawful children of his body?"

To which the poor poet, whom she had so well trained, made no answer, only looking at her with lamentable eyes.

Then she bustled about and found the pen so long laid aside, and put it in his hand, saying: "Come, thou art not so young as thou wast when I married and reclaimed thee from evil, but there is yet time. Write!"

The poor poet was stricken with wonder and even doubted if he had heard aright, so that a moment he stood gazing at her in pitiful uncertainty. Then he saw that this woman to whom he had yielded up the glory of his youth and the hope of his genius, was in earnest. And he said:

"What now shall I write, an it please thee?—mine own epitaph!"

To The Shade of Lamb.



IN what bodiless region dost thou now so-journ, O Carolus Agnus, with thy slim shy soul answering to what was erst its earthly integument? Art thou,—if daring conjecture may follow thee beyond the warm precincts of the cheerful day,—somewhere in the vast stellar interspaces (for the “downright Bible heaven” is not for thee)—wandering forlorn with Her who companioned thy earth journey? Or (and to this chiefly doth my fancy cleave) art thou sheltered in some quiet nebula remote from all that vexed thy spirit in its inferior transit, some celestial image of thy terrestrial Islington; sharing, as of yore, sweet converse with Coleridge, and Hazlitt, and Hunt, and Godwin, and all that rare company in whose variant humor thou wert wont to delect thy sublunary leisure? Not otherwise would the kind Fates ordain; nor would She, the fond guardian of thy mortal course, be wanting to this reunited fellowship. She to whom thy constant heart pledged a most pure sacrifice. Yes, and it is sweet to believe that her old office, in token of her so great love, hath not been taken from her. For, as the high debate proceeds and, waxing warm at some intractability of Godwin’s (who had always power to move thee) thou retortest in shrill, impedimental fashion, She lays to lip an admonitory finger; and

thou, observant of that familiar caution, dost smile with renewed serenity, leaving to the philosopher a victory not fairly his own.

Then Coleridge seemeth to speak, and all is admiring silence. Nothing of his old eloquence hath Samuel Taylor lost by his translation to a higher sphere. Nay, he that was finite (though in thy quaint malice thou wouldst not always have it so) is now, of a truth, infinite; composing without conscious effort a thousand "Christabels," and delivering, unpremeditated, discourse fit for the enthroned gods. The celestial equivalent for "Coleridge is up!" flashes in a manner not to be conveyed by mundane simile, through the wide-scattered ranks of spheres, thrilling even the high-ministrant Thrones and Intelligences, who must needs perform their elect service with an air distraught, as wishing to be of that lower auditory. (Alas! there is *ennui* even in heaven.) While the immortal Mortal pours forth a strain of sublime speech on themes forbidden to our mention here, the shades come thronging thick and fast to listen, as the Roman poet saw them when Sappho and Alcæus with their golden lyres smote the three-headed Cerberus and the tumultuous hordes of Pluto into a ravished silence.

*Utrumque sacro digna silentio
Mirantur umbræ dicere.*

Art thou happy there, O Elia, as when thou didst tarry upon this green earth? Dost thou repine beside the celestial Abana and Pharpar, for the "unspeakable rural solitudes, the sweet security of

streets?" Wouldst thou gladlier tread again the everlasting flints of London, a toilworn clerk, hiding in thy shy bosom a genius that forever invokes the tears and praises of men; thy days of labor sweetened by nights of tranquil study or social converse with the friends whom thy heart sealed for its own? Or wouldst thou, O Elia, be again a child at Christ's, glad to lay thy sick head on a pillow, with the image of maternal tenderness bending over thee that, unknown, had watched thy sleep; or with her, thy life-mate (whom thou so playfully dost call thy cousin, Bridget Elia) bound to thee withal by a more sacred tie than that of wedded love,—wouldst thou revisit the green fields of pleasant Hertfordshire) and all the scenes made dear by so many years of unbroken faith and companionship? Well I believe it, for thou hadst never a mind for joys beyond thy ken. The factitious raptures of spiritists were not for thee, nor wert thou ever seduced from the steady contemplation of thy ideal of happiness here below, by a disordered vision of the New Jerusalem. Thou wert not indeed too fond of the Old Jerusalem—why should there be another! . . .

O rare Spirit, would that I might offer thee a cup of kindly ale, such as so often moved thee, to the world's profit and rejoicing! Better, I doubt not, would it please thee than the o'er-besung nectar of thy incorporeal residence. Thou wert ever for human comforts—"Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, society and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and

fireside conversations." Thou didst ever reluct from the fantastical conceits of epic cookery; thou gavest thy voice for all things truly gustable, and, if thou wouldst do honor to the gods, a leg of mutton failed not to grace thy *lectisternium*. Even from thy choicest pages the sapor of roast pig rises immortal! . . .

How canst thou, whose warm heart-beats we yet feel, neighbor with phantoms,—thou who in life wert never of their fellowship? Thy genial human creed forbade thee to believe much in the promises of men, arrogating a knowledge beyond the grave. This earth sufficed thee—this earth that is the happier and better for thy too brief sojourn upon it. Millions have lived since thou wert called away, yet how few that are worthy to be remembered with thee! We open thy Book and the spell of thy kindly thought is upon us. Thy phrases are loved and familiar. We weep with thee over thy lost childish love, which thou didst again figure in gracious allegory as the Child-Angel who goeth lame but lovely; and we know whose heart lies buried with Ada that sleepeth by the river Pison. Thy tenderness for thy Sister—the great love and tragedy of thy life—is writ in gold where none but angels may turn the page. Thou, whose earth-passage was scarce noticed, art now become a treasure to all feeling hearts. Thou wert indeed a man and a brother, with thy full share of human weaknesses, which thou didst not, in craven humility, accept as a token of divine reprobation; but didst rather cover them as with a mantle of light, in thy true and modest vir-

tues. Thou wouldst reject the title of saint with the fine irony that so well became thee; yet of many is thy saintship approved who would agnize few others in the calendar. Thy soul was full of antique reverence, though it shrank from the fictile faiths of men. A Christmas carol was to thee worth all the psalmody in the world; a kind heart all the theology and word-worship. Thou couldst see no evil in thy fellow man which thou wouldst not readily forgive—save, perhaps, unkindness. Thy feeling toward women, expressed in the most gracious of thy written words, would alone keep thy name sweet for many a future generation. Within thy heart, thy virgin heart, cheated of, yet ever faithful to, its only dream—there bloomed the white flower of chivalry. Cockney, as they called thee, loyal to thy London pots and chimneys, thou wert as knightly as Bayard, as tender as Sidney; and the world may well regret thee as born out of thy due time. Yet herein is the proof of thy rare distinction—that thy life, humbly derived, humbly fulfilled, still sheds an interior light which turns all into beauty; invests the poor and unworthy circumstances of thy earth-progress with the grace of romance; and the farther thou recedest from us, draws us the more to thy attaching and ennobling genius.



Captain Costigan.



THE first hint we had of it was in this way. My old friend, Captain Costigan, looked in at the Cave of Harmony the other night, after seeing the Fotheringay home from one of her undoubted triumphs. I should mention that she had just come in from the provinces and had made a brilliant *début*. The London critics still hesitated as to the true value of her acting, but in spite of their flimsy reservations, she went on her conquering way.

The metropolis was now at her feet. Never did she seem more beautiful; never was her impassive self-content more strikingly manifest. Her admirers, enviously termed the Costigan *claque*, called it a divine languor, the repose of genius and conscious power. Her detractors affirmed that it was mere animal stupidity; that she continued to act, as in the days of Mr. Thackeray, with an utter absence of real passion—some of them even said, with a very slight degree of common intelligence. Howbeit, the Siddons herself did not compel all suffrages, and as the Captain finely said, there is always a skulking cloud whose office it is to shut out the sun—though, perhaps, the moon would be a neater simile.

On this night of my story the Fotheringay had played *Juliet* in a manner worthy of the best tradi-

tions of the stage. I myself had it on the excellent authority of the Captain, whose eyes moistened and whose tongue tripped a little as he recounted for us the fervid encomiums of the foyer. A whisper went round the company that a certain young gentleman of good family—a Mr. Pendennis, I think, and a nephew of the famous clubman—had been hard hit by the Fotheringay; and it was added that the *éclat* of this night's performance would probably clinch the conquest. Captain Costigan hears well when he likes, but of this piece of gossip he was discreetly oblivious.

Something in my old friend's manner betokened that there was more on his mind than the latest triumph of his gifted daughter, and we were soon to learn what it was. I may say that the late Mr. Thackeray, in his memoirs of Captain Costigan, has hinted obscurely at the alleged bibulous propensities of that gallant gentleman and soldier. In this I am afraid Mr. Thackeray, with all his genius, betrayed the insular prejudice of his nation. It is also true that in his printed recollections Mr. Thackeray (who wrote much on high life and plumbed himself on his acquaintance with gentility) sometimes fell into the vulgar habit of referring to the Captain as "Cos." The familiarity is one of which I was never a witness, and I doubt if Mr. Thackeray would have taken the liberty with his living subject which he has ventured upon in the memoirs afore-said.

As for the Captain's drinking, no friend to his memory would dispute that he took his *negus* like

a man and a gentleman to boot. Captain Costigan was of an extreme sensibility (which, indeed, is common to his race), and his tears flowed easily when he was in the drink. But if this is to form an indictment against him, you will be making a sad business of history.

The word recalls me. Captain Costigan, after comforting himself with a mixture steaming hot and fragrant, coughed with a slight emphasis that the company might note him, and then, laying a hand on his breast, said in a tone of strong feeling:

“Gentlemen, to-night at least it shall not be said of me, as of *Polonius* in the play, ‘still harping on his daughter.’ Gratifying to my paternal pride as are these testimonies to the histrionic genius of her who is the light of my life”—here the Captain was overcome by a natural emotion, but gathering himself together, went on bravely—“and whose tender feet I have guided up the steep eminence of fame, my bosom now swells with a weightier cause of joy. It is not for Jack Costigan to boast, gentlemen, but the patriot comes before the father. Less than a half hour ago I had it from my brilliant young friend ‘Boz’—I should say Mr. Charles Dickens of the press—that the Ministry has brought in a bill of Home Rule for Ireland, which is acceptable to all factions of my countrymen at Westminster. Gentlemen, the imperishable glory of rendering long delayed justice to my country has fallen to the Tories, in spite of nearly two centuries of hollow profession by the Whigs. The destinies of the British Empire are secured by this act of a magna-

nimous policy. I call on you to fill your glasses and drink, without heel-taps, to *Hibernia Nova!*"

A burst of applause followed the Captain's speech, and as with our gallant and lamented friend, it was always a word and a song, you may be sure it wasn't long before he gave us in his best voice Ned Lysaght's fervid ditty, "Our Island." And how the glasses rang and the lights tipped at us as he intoned the sentiment!—

For, ah! 'tis our dear native island,
A fertile and fine little island.
May Orange and Green
No longer be seen
Bestained with the blood of our island!

Nor did we let him off with that. Indeed before the party broke up, the honest Captain had quite sung himself out. But I shall not soon forget how he trolled the "Monks of the Screw," and we made a chorus of it that would have gladdened the heart of Prior Jack Curran himself.

* * * *

Ah, me! was it a dream what the Captain said and the merry company pledged in the Cave of Harmony,—a whimsical dream turning a fair hope, as so often before, into loss and derision? God forbid! It is something to have lived for if we shall see that People take its rightful place after how much oppression and scorn and weary misdirected effort! If this thing shall be, of a truth, I shall hail as its first sign the passing of that species of

Irishman whose few good qualities have not weighed with the amount of shame he has brought upon us. He does not show himself so often in real life to-day; is not so busy posing and sentimentalizing as of yore. I hope it may not be long ere it will be a genuine curiosity to find him slobbering, hectoring, bragging and begging in the merciless pages of Thackeray.

It seems to me an added touch of mockery to the misfortunes of Ireland that a maudlin patriotism has at all times existed as a libel on the national character. The professional aspect which it has often assumed, the posturing, bad taste and rhetorical extravagance which have always marked it, have never failed to draw the shafts of a hostile criticism, and to offer a fair mark for the humors of caricature. Both have overdone their work, but it can not be denied that there has been a basis of truth for it. No Englishman ever understood the Irish character better than the creator of Costigan—who, by the way, is not offensive on the score of patriotism. Few writers have dealt with us more unsparingly, though he was too great not to mingle a certain saving kindness with his sharpest satire. He might have been more kind and more just. The mind which conceived *Colonel Newcome*, the “best gentleman in fiction,” was easily capable of it. *Major O’Dowd* will hardly serve us instead, though as little pains as Thackeray took with him, he is worth most of the Irishmen in fiction.

Since the Celtic Renaissance began, with its deep spiritual and patriotic motive—the critics, so long

hostile or merely contemptuous, have taken to considering us more seriously. More true light, more education will do the rest. The pitiable subjection in which this people has so long been held,—of its own loving, ignorant choice, it must be said,—by a power which has too often mingled politics with religion, is fast giving way. Nay, in a vital sense it is already dissolved. Neither this power, strong in the grace of age-long reverence and fidelity, nor any other on the earth, will ever again dare dictate a backward step to a people pressing forward to the goal of liberty. History will not repeat itself in this regard for the Irish people.

* * * *

So, whether you call it a dream or not, I'll believe it—yes, as though Tim Healy, M. P., instead of Costigan, had told me. The refrain of Ned Lysaght's ditty is still with me—would that he might hear it, set to the new tune of hope and promise! And so to conclude, Sir—asking a fair pardon for the few political observations above injected—I pledge you Captain Costigan's toast,

Hibernia Nova!

With this addition,

Esto perpetua!



A Christmas Sermon.



CHRISTMAS makes us all of one religion. It gives us the Christ in whom all or nearly all of us believe—the Christ to whom more or less consciously we are in the habit of referring our good impulses; the Christ that stands for so many of us in the place of conscience.

To be sure, this is not the Christ of the fierce old theology, the Christ of Calvinism and reprobation and all that lurid concept of religion which so long oppressed the world like a nightmare. Not the Christ of the Inquisition in whose name the *san benito* was prepared and the fires of death kindled for those who dared to doubt the unknowable. Not the Christ of Laud or Cranmer, nor the Christ of the Scottish Councils, whose sweet emblems were the stake, the boot, the thumb-screws and the rack. Not the Christ who cast a sword into the world, asserting it as his peculiar privilege to set brother against brother through many centuries of blood and strife. Not the Christ of a Redemption conditioned upon the damnableness of humanity,—the Creator's own handiwork!—and which the human reason is asked to take on trust as a "mystery." Not the Christ of ages of delirium and hallucination—the Christ of trances, dreams and ecstasies—the Christ of a whole vanished world of mummery and madness.

With these several Christs that have made such woeful history, the better part of the world is well done—thank God that we may now add, done forever! The pulpits know it, even though they will not confess the whole truth—but the pews give their silent testimony. Infallibility knows it and with unerring wisdom preaches the new Christ of peace, and mercy, and humanity, whom it was so long convenient to forget. The punitive Christ who sought to avenge his sufferings upon mankind, has given place to the Christ of love and joy. Note it well, for this is the greatest change which our time has seen or shall see.

The old cruel theology is dead, sure enough, even with that ancient and venerable Church whose proud boast has always been that, sustained by Divine guidance and authority, she has never surrendered a line of her tenet or dogma. And if not dead formally and by express repudiation,—which would be too much to ask of the Infallible Church,—it is not the less dead in the hearts of the priests and the worshippers. There is no Promethean heat that can relume these cold ashes. . . .

All this is due to the advance of the human spirit. Theology is dead, but the new Christ lives and belongs to humanity rather than to the churches. In other words, the human spirit, which lives by and for the Ideal, has extracted from the legend of its greatest Martyr such elements as are necessary for its future progress. The rest it leaves in the hands of the priests. But, strange to say, the priests who so long jealously claimed the whole legend, guard-

ing it with fire and sword, and surrounding it with both earthly and infernal penalties,—the priests themselves are not half content with the old Christ, and, but for the pride of caste, they would surely renounce him. Especially as there is less and less profit in upholding a system of man-made theology which abolishes the human reason, and is justified only by a Scheme of Redemption that impeaches the Source of all wisdom and all justice.

Kindness is the one thing that will redeem the world, and it was never a conspicuous feature of the old theology. Let it once be seen and demonstrated what the spirit of human kindness can do in this world, and we shall not be greatly concerned as to the awards of the next. No doubt it is for this very reason that the more enlightened part of the human race has been so long afflicted with a religion of misery—the churches naturally would not discount their own promissory notes upon Heaven.

I will not say that the religion whose cry in the hour of its might was “Compel them to enter in!”—was a curse to the world, for even in its worst periods it consoled, as well as persecuted, the just and the faithful. But I must rejoice to see the age-long duel near an end and the human spirit achieving a bloodless victory at last. Not the least fruit of this victory will be the vindication of human nature and the restoration of its honor and dignity. More and more will this be seen when the degrading idea of a Heaven to be purchased by fawning and wheedling and all manner of spiritual abasement, shall have passed away.

Kindness is the word for the Christmas of the new spirit—for the world has outgrown that species of Christianity which, in the words of Swift, made people hate instead of love one another. Not the selfish kindness which regards only a narrow circle, but the true Christian kindness which goes out to the poor and the stranger, and which is boundless as charity itself.

Let us, every one, contribute to make of Christmas a grand festival of love and humanity; forgiving without hypocritical reservation those who have wronged or injured us, if they persist not in evil; succoring the afflicted, helping the needy, turning away from no office or duty that can add to the measure of human happiness. So shall we give the lie to that old conception of a fallen and all but irredeemable humanity; so shall we signalize the advent of the new Christ, with the onward and upward march of the human spirit.



The Endless War.



WAS born in chains and have been breaking fetters all my life. Fetters of fear, fetters of superstition, fetters of hereditary hatred and prejudice, all the spiritual gyves that are prepared for most of us ere we are bidden into this world. A slave I came from my mother's womb, and I am not yet free. Not a link have I snapped in my struggle for liberty but the ghosts of the Past have risen up to reproach me. I being but human, am often tired of the contest; they, immortal, ever renew it with a passion and a vigor to which weariness is unknown. Before I was, this battle went on in the souls of those from whom I inherit, but they died and made no sign, though bequeathing the duel to me. Ah, but the struggle is long and the end is ever in doubt. What the Day gains the Night reconquers. No matter—the word is still to fight on!

Often the ghosts assail me with arguments, and well they know how to seek out the weakness of my soul: "Canst thou be happier or wiser than so many generations of thy blood? Why dost thou strive to cast off the bonds which they endured patiently unto righteousness? In sundering these, thou dost break also with them and art become an apostate from all thy foregathered kin. Have a care!—the burden of thy treason shall lie heavy on thy heart."

In faith it does now, and my reason is not always ready to make answer to this accusing Voice of the Chains. I should be more at ease no doubt—for liberty is not happiness—could I elect to silence the voice by giving over my reason and going whithersoever the ghosts would lead me. But I will not buy my peace at such a price—I will not be false to the rule of mind which I have chosen for guide in my pilgrimage. Ye shall not write me among the sinners against light! . . .

Yet I had been happier had I never thought of my bonds. Many I know that wear these chains lightly, as not wearing them at all; and others cover them with the flowers of duty and devotion, and sweet Christian humility—still the chains are there! For the Past is a terrible enslaver and these fetters were forged in a time so remote that it need fear no witnesses. Yes, the Past enslaves and the dead oppress us more than the living. With men in the flesh like ourselves, we can do battle—nay, we can even feel a joy in the fierce grip and encounter. But there is less satisfaction in this business of fighting ghosts, those warriors of the Past who seek to make the Present and the Future their own. Here we touch the power of the Unknown and the Unknowable with which men conjure to-day as potently as ever in the past—the ghosts ever prompting and abetting.

For in truth the history of the past two hundred years has been largely a battle with the ghosts. Not a few times were they routed and dispersed, but always they reformed their shadowy battalions and

came back again to the issue. Vainly did we spend our best strength upon them—often we did but wound and exhaust ourselves, while the goblins mocked our useless efforts. Oh, we did not come off wholly without victory, nor, ghosts though they be, did they go quite unscathed. And though it is just that we reproach ourselves with having too often shown them an ill-judged mercy, we *did* wrest from them some cruel privileges which shall never be theirs again. We *did* strike some blows that were felt, hard as it is to wound them, and of this we were assured by the grimaces of their holy representatives.

And if they now again attack us with fresh vigor and in numbers undiminished, we too have enlisted for the endless war. Still shall we rear our standard against this tyranny of the grave, this oppression of humanity by the chimera of the Unknown, this vampyre Past that sucks out the life and hope and joy of the Present. Still shall we do battle with the ghosts of man-made myth and superstition that so long have held the human soul in a dominion of terror. Boldly and vigilantly shall we dispute them when they seek to rob us of the safe landmarks of reason, that they may have power to drag us back unto the darkness of the Past. Nor shall we be the less on our guard when they come, as is now their wont, with flags of truce, with honeyed compliments, with fraternal embraces, nay, even with an excellent mimicry of the very speech of Liberty—it is the endless war!

† † † †

It is said that the greatest revolutions accomplish themselves silently. A striking illustration of this is seen in the abolition of the theologic Hell, which has taken place in our day. It has been attended by no religious wars, or civic bloodshed, or St. Bartholomews, or burnings at the stake, or inquisitorial tortures. Not even a papal Bull has been launched to save the monstrous chimera which was so long deemed a supreme article of religious faith. The oldest of Christian churches well knows that Hell is dying a natural death—knows, too, that no ancient mummary or conjuration will avail to keep it alive. As the king's touch can no longer cure the king's evil, so the hand of the Church has lost the power of reluming the bale-fires of Hell. I do not believe that the Church is very much concerned because, after a duel of many ages, it knows now that it can not contend against the spirit of humanity. Therefore, it has learned to accept defeat with a good grace and even to turn defeat into a kind of triumph by consenting to that which it knows to be inevitable. For this is the wisdom of the serpent, and it is this which we now see in the attitude of the Church toward the general abandonment of the dogma of an eternal Hell.

So the greatest of all evils raised by the human imagination is at last perishing under the sentence of men, its ancient fires blackening and smouldering in the light of the risen sun of humanity. But do not go too near, for it is not dead yet and a spiteful flame, the spirt of some old theologic malice, might leap out and destroy you! I think indeed that it

will bear watching for a long time yet. The monster is perhaps only scotched, not killed; and that Terror is still so fresh, so fresh and awful! that we can not yet regard it as laid forever. Let the bravest of us keep watch and ward over the monster that it come not back into full life again; for Hell is so cunning and—think of it—it has lived nineteen hundred years! . . .

The Hell of theology was a nightmare creation of human fear and hate, seasoned with the perfectly human qualities of malignity and vindictiveness and malice, which we are, quite without warrant, in the habit of ascribing to the Devil. We know now that the Devil had no claw or hoof in it, and that this frightful Hell, which the world received during many ages in the name of Infinite Love, was solely and purely the work of men. This we now see clearly by examining the dreadful legend which still persists, though its lurid characters are fast fading out and its dominion over the souls of men broken forever.

Yes, Hell is gone forever! The power of Darkness is dissolved. The sun of Love is fully arisen. The stone is rolled back from the sepulchre in which the human spirit has been shut up during weary centuries. The most terrible of all despotisms is shattered in the dust. The greatest of all deliverances is achieved. Hell is dead! Proclaim jubilee to all the world! Shall we not sing and laugh and dance over the death of the great enemy of our race? Has it not filled the world long enough with tears and terror, and shall we not make merry over the

hideous monster's death, as our best tribute to the many generations that wept and mourned in the shadow of Hell?

It is a fact that the human race has only just escaped from Hell! The liberation has been wrought in our day, yet so silently that the world has hardly perceived it. But the future historian will write: "Humanity descended into Hell in the First century and ascended into Heaven in the Twentieth." Nineteen hundred years in Hell!—was it not long enough, oh God of mercy and justice? . . .

This, then, is the true spiritual emancipation of the human race, and happy are we who have been privileged to see it. Think of the countless martyrs who died by fire and axe, who perished in loathsome dungeons or broke their hearts in exile, for only daring to dream of this glad Era of Liberty which now is ours! Alas! in their suffering and misery, their torture and abandonment, their utter cutting off from all human succor and their consignment to the reprobation of the damned,—how they must have thirsted for a sight of the Ideal City, the true Kingdom of God, where we, more fortunate pilgrims, have at length arrived! Sainted martyrs of humanity, yours was the sad and bitter sowing; ours is the happy harvest. Blest be your honored names, encircled with fire and pain—and thrice blest the nameless ones who died, unknown and unmarked, in the same holy cause! Not in vain did you steel your souls to meet the fire, the torture, the supreme bitterness of death. Rejoice from the Heaven of the just whence you lean to acclaim a vic-

tory that is all your own ; the light that you foresaw is at last risen upon the world, the spirit of Hate is dethroned among men, the Gates of Hell shall no longer prevail against mankind !



Claude Tillier.



UMANITY has its roll of saints as well as the One True Church, but seldom does a name appear on both rosters of the canonized. The Devil's Advocate has his chance to plead against the one as against the other. To make the parallel complete, the faithful of the One True Church pray to their saints; the believers in the larger creed of humanity invoke those shining names upon the course of liberty and progress.

It is of one among the humblest and least known of the saints of humanity that I am about to write. No better proof of the high worth of such a soul could be required than this impulse, strong upon me, to pay some tribute, not altogether unworthy I may hope, to the virtues summoned in the name and fame of Claude Tillier. Both name and fame are little known to us, while we are deafened and overwhelmed with the petty trumpeting, the vulgar insistence of the mediocre. In the clamor of these baser voices many precious messages are lost—nothing more precious, we may believe, than the gospel of such a life.

"I fell into this world," writes Tillier, "like a leaf that the storm shakes from the tree and rolls along the highway." He was a child of the Revolution, born in the ninth year of the Republic, 1801,

at Clemécy, a small town in the Department of Nièvre. But one of his few biographers bids us take note that his birthplace was in the center of ancient Gaul, near the Loire, in the true home of the Gallic spirit, on the boundary line between Troubadour and Trouvère. Never was a man of true genius condemned to a more adverse fate. He, a son of the Revolution, poet, thinker, philosopher, often felt the sharp tooth of hunger; clung always to the ragged skirts of want; died at last in early manhood as poor as he had lived. Ah, but this is not all! For he tells us: "I did not lose courage—I always hoped that out of the wings of some bird sweeping the skies, a quill would fall down fitted to my fingers, and I have not been disappointed."

With this quill he wrote, "My Uncle Benjamin," his masterpiece—indeed, his one book. Happy among the sons of Cadmus is he who writes but one book and that a great one! Long will his fame be preserved after the mighty tribe of the voluminous shall have littered the shores of oblivion. Decay, death and silence are written against the fecund, past and present. Hugo produced as much prose, poetry and drama as though gifted with power to multiply himself by fifty. Time may be when enough shall not remain for one. Scott slumbers a lethal sleep, crushed under his folios. Most of the Elizabethans and their imitators are dead, save Shakespeare, and even *his* best makes no more than one good book. The same is true of many later scribblers, more or less famous, who worked out their poor brains, and having made, as they

thought, a monument for themselves, fell asleep under it.

. *it is a tale*
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

To this favor must the present literary tribe come, whose name is legion, in constant parturition at the behest of the publishers. Good apothecary, give me an ounce of civet to sweeten my imagination!—and let me take into my loving hands the precious thin volume of Elia and this cherished souvenir of Tillier. . . .

A formal criticism of “My Uncle Benjamin” I shall not attempt to write. The book is a message straight from the heart of a true man. Could more be said? Fine as is its literary art, fresh its sympathy of touch as the breath of the morning, keen its irony and brilliant its analysis of motive,—all these are subordinate to the deep note of humanity without which art is void and dead. The beginnings of a story, somewhere observes Mr. Howells, are often obscure. Doubtless this is true of the Frenchman’s charming work. What is not obscure, however, is the vital genius of the book, the living force of the man behind it, stirring the heart, thrilling the pulse, though the brain which wrought the spell has been dust for fifty years.

We know that Tillier wrote it for the feuilleton of a provincial newspaper, where it long lay hidden before a real publisher was found. We know also that recognition in due measure never came to

him during his life; that it is only within a few years the world has taken note of him. These are the marks of the true Immortal. We would not have it otherwise now, rightly appraising the legacy he left us. One can say nothing that is not trite on this subject of neglected genius breaking its bonds after infinite struggle, rising above the vapors of ignorance and envy, and conquering from beyond the grave. And yet if aught should move the depths within us, it is this. O death, where is thy victory! O true soul, intent on thy God-marked course, scorning all petty human accidents! O lover of liberty, keeping thy faith without a stain amid a sordid world! O gentle hero, hard was thy sufferance, great shall be thy guerdon. To thee humanity offers its love and tears. Thy name is a shrine, thy memory an abiding place where the just and true shall pause awhile to gather strength for the future that shall yet be won!



It would be easy to point out certain mechanical defects in Tillier's charming story. There is very little action, no plot at all, and the end is inconsequential. Mr. Stevenson observes that the blow from Rawdon Crawley's fist, delivered upon the noble features of my Lord Steyne, made "Vanity Fair" a work of art. So it might be said that the enforced osculation of Dr. Benjamin Rathery upon the anatomy of the Marquis de Cambyse is the epical incident of Tillier's novel. But who cares for plots, intrigues and "such gear" in the presence of manifest genius? Let us leave all that to the penny

dreadfuls of the hour. It has no place in the estimation of such a writer as Tillier.

And yet the story, even as a story, is as excellent of its kind as Goldsmith's delightful tale. It is marked by the same unstrained simplicity, with a deeper philosophy, a keener insight into human nature, and perhaps a finer literary art than we may ascribe to the more famous Irishman. What a merry company is that to which Tillier introduces us!—Machecourt and Page and Millet-Rataut, the poet; Arthus and Rapin and Dr. Minxit, with his amazing theory of physic, and the prince of good drinkers, the incomparable Uncle Benjamin. If you have not read how that jovial giant impersonated the Wandering Jew for the simple folk of Moulot, you have skipped as good a thing as you shall find in Rabelais or Le Sage. Say also that you have missed the Doctor's exquisite revenge on the illustrious Marquis de Cambyse, and I am sorry for you indeed. . . .

Tillier suffers under the reproach of having been a provincial. Paris never made him her own, though once he walked her pavements a dejected lad; and the Academy of the Immortals knew nothing of him. A drudging schoolmaster, an unwilling conscript in a cause which his soul abhorred—the cause of the Holy Alliance; a poor pamphleteer, an obscure journalist, waging war all too brilliant against the bigoted clergy, the stupid bourgeoisie of his native district, now and then with the instinct of genius turning to higher themes;—in all this, you will say, there was little

to give promise of an immortal reputation. Yet, oh marvelous power of truth and genius! see now after fifty years the name of this humble man shedding a clear light upon his native place, which all the world may see; adding its distinct ray even to the rich literary glory of his race. Many a pilgrim has found his way to the sunken grave at Nevers where rests this son of nature, this apostle of liberty, whose free forehead was never shamed with a lie. The treasure of his thought is no longer locked up in his own language; it is now a precious part of the literature of many tongues and stranger peoples. The seed of the humble sower has sprung up a hundredfold, and the harvest is now and forever! . . .

I have called Tillier one of the saints of humanity. Let me add a word to prove that the characterization is neither forced nor unworthy. A German translator says of him truly that "unselfishness was his virtue and human dignity his religion." The human saintship of the man may easily be established who, in his own phrase, "always took the part of the weak against the strong, always lived beneath the tattered tents of the conquered and slept by their hard bivouacs." So absolutely true and free was this man who, again in his own words, "took his daily bread out of God's hand, without asking for more,"—that we may divine at once the creed of such a nature. "I do not pray," he says, "for the reason that God knows better than I what He must do, nor do I adore Him because He does not need adoration, and the worship which

the masses offer Him is nothing but the flattery of selfish creatures who want to enter Paradise. But if I have a penny to spare, I give it to the poor."

In drawing the lineaments of a liberal saint, it is likely enough that many pious people will find a resemblance to the Devil. Tillier's life was embittered by some polemics unworthy of his genius. He incurred the anathema of the Nevers clergy by scoffing at the alleged thighbone of Saint Flavia, and the good Catholics of the place believed that his early death was due to the vengeance of the outraged virgin. One must regret that such talents as his were diverted from their high and proper use by this petty warfare. The same remark applies to his long war with Monsieur Dupin, the official big-wig of the district. But Tillier saw no difference between bigotry in the abstract and bigotry in the concrete; between the official charlatanism which had the nation for its stage and a reduced copy of the same at home. In this, also, dropping the question of his literary reputation, he was acting the part of a true man.

My reading has found nothing more beautiful and pathetic than the closing scene in the life of Claude Tillier. It is drawn for us by his own hand. His very soul speaks to us—scarcely does the vesture of clay intervene. With death near to claim him, he turned once more to the world which had scorned him, and his genius attained a higher and purer eloquence than it had ever known. Never from the soul of man has come a message more

sweet and tender, searching the heart with a deeper pathos, than this in which he shaped his farewell to life:—

“I die a few days before my schoolmates, but I die at that age when youth is nearing its end and life is but a long decay. Unimpaired I return to God the gifts with which he entrusted me; free, my thought still soars through space. . . . I am like the tree that is cut down and still bears fruit on the old trunk amidst the young shoots that come after. Pale, beautiful Autumn! this year thou hast not seen me on thy paths that are fringed with fading flowers. Thy mild sun, thy spicy air have refreshed me only through my window; but we depart together. With the last leaf of the poplar, with the last flower of the meadow, with the last song of the birds, I wish to die,—aye, with all that is beautiful in the space of a year. May the first breath of frost call me away. Happy he who dies young and need not grow old!” . . .

Dear Master, Friend, Poet, our yearning love and regret may not heal the sorrows which were thy earthly portion; but thy spirit lives on to guide us. It is enough : hail and farewell !



Henriette Renan.



HAVE been reading, not for the first time, the story of her love, her sacrifice and devotion, in the memoir written by her brother Ernest Renan. I doubt if there be a finer page, one in which the heart speaks with a truer accent, in the lists of biography.

Great as her brother was, interest in this woman so modest and self-effacing, whose whole life was a tragedy of duty, will deepen as time goes on. But for her influence it is conceivable that the world would not have gained the ablest liberal scholar of modern times, and the Church would not have to reckon with its most deadly yet suavest antagonist. She was his intellectual mate—he admitted it, and he compares his distress of mind at the loss of her co-operation to the “anguish of a patient who has suffered amputation and who has the limb he was deprived of constantly within his sight.” Her letters to him, written during the period of his spiritual struggle at Issy and St. Sulpice are scarcely less interesting than his own, and they will perhaps be read in some remote time when the “Life of Jesus” shall be neglected, if not forgotten (he himself has said that after the lapse of a thousand years only two books, the Bible and Homer, will be reprinted).

Yes, even on intellectual grounds, Henriette well deserves that her name should live with that of the brother to whom she gave all the treasures of her loving soul, whose character she helped to form and whose career she made possible. But it is at the purely human side of the relation which united Henriette and Ernest Renan that I should wish to glance in this little paper. The world knows enough of his intellectual glory; it knows, too, that she suffered herself to be absorbed in him and his work, that her mind was hardly inferior to his, nay, that his spirit was not seldom content to rest on lower levels than those to which she ascended. Let us, then, look at them merely as brother and sister—it is so, we may be sure, that she would prefer to be regarded. . . .

Renan was in the habit of attributing the Gascon in his nature to his mother, who, as he tells us, carried a gay, witty and lively disposition even into her vigorous old age. The charming traditions and anecdotes of Tréguier in the forepart of the “Recollections of my Youth” were chiefly drawn from the well-stocked memory of his mother. One of the happiest impressions I have myself derived from that delightful book, is the picture of Renan listening to his mother’s chat at evening in her room at his Paris home. On these occasions, he tells us, a light was never brought in, the rays of a friendly street lamp serving to make a kind of twilight in the room, highly favorable to the legends of the old lady, which were always concerned with *le vieux temps* in Brittany. I am not sure that the great

man has given us anything more memorable than this as literature, or more worthy of that fine sympathy which was the distinctive note of his character.

But Henriette had inherited her father's temperament, which was of the melancholy Breton cast—the son seems not to preclude the painful supposition that the poor man sought his own death, as the easiest escape from his troubles. “Did he forget himself,” he asks, “in one of those long dreams of the Infinite, which in that Breton race often verge upon the eternal slumber? Did he feel that he had earned repose? . . . We know not.”

Henriette's melancholy deepened with her years. In later life her brother says she had a sort of worship of sorrow and almost welcomed every opportunity of shedding tears. Herein she differed greatly from the author of the “Life of Jesus,” whose uniform good spirits and mildly satiric gaiety gave nearly as much scandal as his writings to the strictly orthodox.

In her youth Henriette was much admired for her modest beauty—her brother speaks of the peculiar softness of her eyes and the delicate shapeliness of her hands. Even before leaving Tréguier, all undowered as she was, she might have married well once or twice but for the idea of duty which bound her to her family. The religious atmosphere of Tréguier, an ancient episcopal city, confirmed her natural sadness and strongly inclined her toward a life of retirement. At twelve years, her brother says, she was grave in thought and appearance,

borne down with anxiety, haunted by melancholy presentiments. And here is one of the tenderest pages of the memoir, written when the sense of her loss was still poignantly fresh with Renan: "I came into the world in February, 1823. The advent of a little brother was a great comfort to my sister. She attached herself to me with all the ardor of a shy and tender nature, endued with an immense longing to love something. I remember yet the petty tyrannies I practised on her and against which she never revolted. When she was going out in full dress to attend gatherings of girls of her own age, I would cling to her gown and beseech her to remain. Then she would turn back, take off her holiday attire and stay with me. One day, in jest, she threatened she would die if I were not a good child, and pretended to be dead, in fact, sitting in an arm-chair. The horror caused me by the feigned immobility of my dear sister is perhaps the strongest impression ever made upon me, whom fate did not permit to witness her last sigh. Beside myself, I flew at her and bit her terribly on the arm. I can hear the shriek she gave even now. To all the reproaches showered on me I could make only one answer, 'But why were you dead? Are you going to die again?'"

Henriette was seventeen when the father's death threw upon her a large share of the burden of supporting the little family. She had thought much of entering the conventual life and she was especially drawn to a convent in a near-by town (Lannion) which was part hospital and part seminary. To

Lannion the family removed after the catastrophe which had plunged them into poverty, but Henriette at once gave up her dream of a religious vocation. She looked upon herself as being responsible for her brother's future, and she set herself not only to aid in supporting the family but also to clear off the heavy debts which her father had left them.

The family returned to Tréguier and Henriette took up the work of a professional teacher. Alain, the elder brother, had gone to try his fortune in Paris. Henriette failed after a trial of much bitterness, and no resort was left her but to follow Alain into exile. She obtained a position in Paris as under-mistress in a small school for girls. Her brother records that the beginning of her Paris life was terrible. "That cold and arid world, so full of imposition and imposture, that populous desert where she counted not one single friend, drove her desperate." The homesickness which causes the Breton conscript to die without any apparent malady, assailed her cruelly, but her resolution stood firm. After a time of many hardships and great labor she secured a better place. Her brother observes that during this period she attained a "prodigious mental development," working sixteen hours a day and successfully passing all the prescribed public examinations. She became especially strong in history, and at the same time her religious ideas underwent a change. Like her brother, afterward, she rejected the supernatural, but as he himself records, "the fundamental relig-

ious sentiment which was hers by nature, as well as by reason of her early education, was too deep to be shaken."



I pass quickly over those five years in Paris, the most important result of which was her procuring for Ernest a scholarship in the Catholic seminary of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet and thus opening for him a career which has received as much of the "fierce white light" that beats upon an intellectual throne as any in modern times. Renan's account of the matter is as follows:

"Educated at Tréguier by some worthy priests who managed a sort of seminary there, I had early given signs of an inclination toward the ecclesiastical state of life. The prizes I won at school delighted my sister who mentioned them to a kind-hearted and distinguished man, physician to the school in which she taught and a very zealous Catholic, Dr. Descuret. He reported the chance of getting a good pupil to Monseigneur Dupanloup, then the brilliantly successful manager of the small seminary of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet, and came back to my sister with the news that he had the offer of a scholarship for me. I was then fifteen and a half years old." Renan admits that even thus early his sister was inclined to view the decided clerical bent of his education with some regret. Her own religious convictions were tottering, but, he says, she knew the respect due to a child's faith and never at this time sought to dissuade him from the path which he was following, "of his freest vo-

lition." And he records with a touch for which we may be grateful, "she came to see me every week, still wearing the plain green woollen shawl which had sheltered her proud poverty far away in Brittany."

Thus Henriette gave him to the Church, as it was Henriette who later influenced him to renounce the priestly calling.

After five years in Paris, her meagre salary being all inadequate to the demands upon it, Henriette decided upon a further sacrifice. To pay off her father's debts and to secure the little homestead at Tréguier, she accepted a more distant and far less hopeful exile than that to which she had now in some degree grown accustomed. Leaving France, which she was not again to see for ten long years—this was in the winter of 1841—she crossed the greater part of Europe and entered the service of a noble family in Poland, as governess and private teacher.

In 1845 Ernest Renan declined the vows that would have made him a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec and left the Seminary of St. Sulpice. He was not then a priest, as many have wrongly supposed, though he had assumed the tonsure and taken minor orders. It is also important to note that he renounced the Church and the Christian faith on purely scientific grounds. Renan never dreamt of taking up any other form of Christianity, still less of joining those inconsistent sectaries who call themselves Liberal or Neo-Catholics and whose delusion seems proof against the

most constant discouragement and even an occasional excommunication. His Catholicism, as he said, was the Catholicism of the Fathers, of the revered dogmatists of the Church, from whose canon and interpretation there is henceforth no appeal. Being unable to accept it, he separated himself from it—there was no middle course for him. Casuistically regarded, this ought to give Renan, in the Catholic view, a preferred position among agnostics; yet no man, not even Voltaire, has been more bitterly assailed by the rancor ecclesiastical. And of all kinds of human malevolence, it has long since been agreed that this is the very worst.



The story of Renan's doubts and his final determination by which Tréguier may have lost a bishop who would have revived her ancient traditions, is powerfully told in the "Recollections." There indeed it has its meditated literary form, but I prefer the simpler, artless version in the "Letters," which were not published until after the death of Ernest Renan. I prefer it also because these "Letters" lay bare the very soul of Henriette and exhibit such an example of devotion to truth and duty as is rarely given to the world. The crowning obligation which Ernest Renan owed to the love and devotion of his sister is best told in his own words:

"My sister advanced me a sum of twelve hundred francs to enable me to wait and to supplement whatever insufficiency of income such a position (that of usher or under-teacher) might at first present. That sum was the corner-stone of my whole

life. I never exhausted it, but it secured me the calm of mind so indispensable if I was to think in peace, and saved me from being overwhelmed by taskwork which would have broken me down."

Brave Henriette! Her reward was to come in the six years of perfect happiness and peace during which she and her brother lived together in Paris after her return from Poland. Her greatest trial, too, belongs to the close of this period, when Ernest married and his heart was shared by another. Let no one think to censure Henriette because it cost her a terrible struggle to divide her brother's love. There is no great love that is not selfish and exclusive by its very nature, and that of Henriette was no exception. God knows her long years of bitter exile, her youth wasted in labor and self-sacrifice, her prayers, and tears, and devotion, gave her the first title in this brother's affections. So he recognized and so he told her at last, after a season of misunderstanding that sorely tried both their hearts; offering to relinquish in her favor this other love. Ah, but this was to challenge the nobility of her nature—she whose life had been all sacrifice would accept none at his hands. So the marriage took place and the tact and graciousness of the young wife* soon brought about a perfect union and reconciliation of all three. It was Henriette's savings that set the young housekeeping on foot—without her, Renan confesses, he could never have coped with his new responsibilities. The birth of one child and the untimely death of an-

Renan married Cornélie Scheffer, niece of the famous painter Ary Scheffer.

other still closer drew these loving hearts. After her own death he wrote:

“Oh, my God, have I done all that in me lay to ensure her happiness? With what bitterness do I now reproach myself for my habit of reserve toward her, for not having told her oftener how dear I held her, for having yielded too easily to my love of silent meditation, for not having made the most of every hour in which she was spared to me! But I take that rare soul to witness that she was always first in my heart of hearts, that she ruled my whole moral life as none other ever ruled it, that she was the constant beginning and end of all my existence in sorrow and in joy.”

Let us hope that the dead are not denied the consolation of hearing such avowals!



Henriette Renan died in Syria in the year 1860. With Madame Renan she had accompanied her brother on a scientific mission to the country known in ancient times as Phœnicia. This honorable function had been intrusted to Renan by the Emperor Napoleon III, and it had the most important results upon his career. Readers of the “Life of Jesus” will remember the beautiful dedication—perhaps the most beautiful ever penned—“to the pure soul of my sister Henriette.” For it was amid the scenes consecrated by the Gospel that he wrote the greater part of his most celebrated work. In this congenial task brother and sister passed a short period of great happiness. The village of Ghazir high above the sea at the far end of the bay of Kes-

rouan, is specially identified with this sojourn. Renan describes it as one of the loveliest spots in the world. It is surrounded by exquisite green valleys and the mountains are more beautiful, he says, than anything he had seen in the Lebanon.

Henriette shared to the full his labor and his enthusiasm in writing the "Life of Jesus." All day they worked together in silence and at night they planned the morrow's task. "I shall love this book," she said, "because we have done it together, first of all, and then because I like it in itself." She had never been so happy and her communion with her brother had never been so intimate. Often she remarked that those days at Ghazir were passing by as in a Paradise. Alas! it is in such ideal moments that Fate prepares her worst. Poor Henriette's pride and pleasure were short-lived. In the midst of their preoccupation sister and brother were attacked by the terrible fever which is endemic along the Syrian coast. They were now at the village of Amschit, which they had previously made their headquarters while in the Byblos region. Sister and brother were alone together in this last solemn scene, Madame Renan having been recalled to Europe a short time before. Henriette's weakened constitution speedily yielded to the dread malady; she passed away while her brother lay unconscious in the next room. "We may have bidden each other farewell," he says, "for all I know. She may have spoken some precious parting word which the terrible hand of fate has wiped from the tablet of my brain." His own state was so desperate that the

doctor would suffer no delay, but ordered that he be carried away at once in a litter which had been intended for Henriette, and placed on board a French ship that lay in waiting. The physician remained behind to superintend her funeral. The simple villagers of Amschit, who had learned to love her, followed her to the grave. She was laid to rest in the tomb of a kindly Maronite. There she still reposes. "I shrink from the idea of taking her from the beautiful mountains where she had been so happy," wrote her brother; "from the midst of the worthy folk she loved, to lay her in one of those dreary modern cemeteries she held in such deep horror. Some day, of course, she must come back to me, but who can tell what corner of the world shall hold my grave? Let her wait for me then under the palms of Amschit, in the land of the antique mysteries, by sacred Byblos!"

Such is, too hastily sketched, the portrait of one of the most beautiful souls that ever came from God. Not less valuable was her life than her brother's, in its lofty courage and devotion to duty,—of a higher value, indeed, as he himself confessed, in its idealistic attachment to pure virtue.

Hers was no cloistered sanctity refining upon itself and practising a supreme egoism in the name of religion. Her truth was tried by every test of sacrifice, by the crucible of a bitter experience with the world, by an utter renunciation of self. She loved much, truly, and through the wondrous power of a great love her life attained harmony and completeness. . . .

Saint Henriette!

Byron.



HE clever gentleman who has been called the “merry” Andrew Lang, but who is not so merry now as formerly—age and the near rushing of the river having somewhat undulcified that joyous spirit—has recently dashed off a survey and judgment of the literature of the Nineteenth age. Readable, and provocative, and entertaining, surely it is, for the hand that wrote the “Letters to Dead Authors” has not lost its cunning, nor the charming literary style its wonted allurements. But the latest awards and strictures of Mr. Lang are not less to be challenged than those of yore—nay, they are the more to be combated, since age has brought to the charmer an unpleasing dogmatism. Mr. Lang did not, could not, persuade all of us when his humor was of its mellowest and the glamour of youth, that most potent aid to heresy, wrought in his favor its own illusion: shall he fare better now when the Jester, in spite of himself, takes on something of the bitter note of Ecclesiastes? . . .

In his latest disparagement of the greatest English poet of the last century, Mr. Lang is only harking back to his “old lunes.” The modern school of English literary criticism has found in Byron its greatest stumbling block. Since the passing of Matthew Arnold, there has been perhaps no oracu-

lar voice in English literary criticism; but the voice of Andrew Lang, if not oracular, has at least been raised with persistency.

Now Matthew Arnold, exclusive as he was in his literary partialities, dealt more fairly with Byron than Mr. Lang. For, though Arnold's exigent culture and sense of form were revolted by the noble lord's crying sins against pure artistry, yet he appreciated justly the importance of Byron as a force in literature, crediting him (after Swinburne) with the "imperishable excellence of sincerity and strength"; and, with much enlightening criticism, he did not attempt to degrade the author of "Childe Harold" from his lofty rank. Indeed, Matthew Arnold reckoned Byron, as a literary power, next in order to Shakespeare and Milton—the established European verdict has long awarded him the *second* place.

Mr. Lang is not better founded in his classics or his prosody than was Matthew Arnold, but he is ambitious, at least, of seeming to have more courage than the latter, for he actually proposes to unhorse the "Childe" at this late day. So have we read that once

*A falcon tow'ring in her pride o' place
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.*

Yet the bold Andrew's courage is, after all, of a strongly marked Scotch variety—he will get some other reckless body to lead the way and take the first burden of cursing. And thus he does it:

"'Byron,' says Mr. Saintsbury, (*sic*) 'seems to me a poet distinctly of the second class, and not even

of the best kind of second, inasmuch as his greatness is derived chiefly from a sort of parody, a sort of imitation of the qualities of the first. His verse is to the greatest poetry what melodrama is to tragedy, what plaster is to marble, what pinchbeck is to gold.' ”

Prof. Saintsbury is a respectable and laborious plodder who has written many volumes of criticism upon literature which might have been suffered to speak for itself—nay, which, in spite of Prof. Saintsbury, will continue to speak for itself. One of his critical achievements was to brand Dickens with the charge of vulgarity for daring to write a true history of England. Mr. Lang holds identical views as to Dickens. *Arcades ambo!*

Having thus pushed another before him into the breach, the canny Andrew finds heart to say:

‘Such, however unpopular they may be, are my own candid sentiments, for though from childhood I could, and did, read all our great poets with pleasure, it was not with the kind of pleasure which Byron in his satire and his declamation could occasionally give me.’ ”

Is not this a luminous confession? And how artful is the suggestion that *from childhood* the preternatural Andrew discriminated justly touching the poet about whom the rest of the world had gone wrong!

There can be no greater curse, in an artistic sense, than to be one part poet and three parts critic—the equation of Andrew Lang. How differently a real poet would have felt, is made clear to us by

the confession of Alfred Tennyson—a dreaming boy of fifteen, when the news came of Byron's death:

"I thought that everything was over and finished for everyone—that nothing else mattered! I remember I walked out alone and carved 'Byron is dead!' into the sandstone."

* * * *

We shall agree with Mr. Lang that Byron is (often) monotonous, that he is rhetorical, that his versification is (sometimes) incredibly bad, and that he is (sometimes) "more obscure, mainly by dint of hurry, bad printing and bad grammar, than Mr. Browning." All of which is true—as true as that Shakespeare is often prolix, tiresome, obscure; that his clowns are not infrequently the most insufferable nuisances ever put upon the stage, raising a hyperbolic idea of the stupidity of the Elizabethan audiences; that scores of pages preserved from oblivion by his better work, are not of the slightest literary value.

But the blemishes upon Shakespeare do not blind us to his essential greatness (though they were too much for Voltaire), nor should the blemishes upon Byron have a like unhappy effect. Mr. Lang "can not understand the furore which was so much the child of his title, his beauty, his recklessness and his studiously cultivated air of mystery." To one who was able to disparage Byron in short clothes, the "furore" will, of course, present some difficulty; but for us who, far removed from the spell of that splendid personality, still give thanks for the genius that aided so powerfully in the spread of the new and

liberal gospel of humanity which ushered in the Nineteenth age—for us the fact is intelligible enough, but of infinitely less significance than Byron's share in striking the keynote of the new time.

Byron's identification of himself with the world-spirit, so dreadfully in travail at the dawn of the last century, even more than his poetical achievement, determines his greatness. For men are more than metres and the prophet is greater than the poet. But even with regard to his poetical achievement, I do not believe that the Langs and Saintsburys will ever be able to take a stone from that high column. There has been, for some time past, greater artifice in carving heads upon cherry stones, and a surprising degree of metrical skill, which none has better exemplified than Mr. Lang himself, in his fortunate poetical conceits. In the natural order, the granite cutters are followed by the lapidaries and polishers; for there is much display of pretty gewgaws on the lower levels of Parnassus. But what poet since that evil day at Missolonghi,—

*Sad Missolonghi, sorrowing yet
O'er him, the noblest star of fame
That e'er in life's young glory set,—*

has given the world such verse as the stanzas on Waterloo, the Storm in the Alps, the awakening of Chillon's prisoner, the Bridge of Sighs, with Venice, "throned on her hundred isles," the Gladiator, "butchered to make a Roman holiday," the mar-moreal apostrophe to the ocean, the "Isles of Greece"—nay, even the Wreck in "Don Juan." Shall

we rob poetry of its garland and memory of its richest treasures at the bidding of Andrew Lang?—

Did not Byron write in his “Vision of Judgment” the best satirical-burlesque poem in the language—so incomparably the best, in truth, that no English poet of mark has since ventured to enter that field? And what poem of the Nineteenth century has more value as a human document than “Don Juan?” What literary work, verse or prose, has done so much to clear the air of the social cant and hypocrisy which it has been the century’s chief mission to get rid of, but of which a vast deal yet remains in the world? I take up my Taine—an excellent critic, Mr. Lang!—and I read:

“England was at the height of war with France and thought it was fighting for morals and liberty. In English eyes, at this time, church and constitution were holy things—beware how you touch them, if you would not become a public enemy! In this fit of national passion and Protestant severity, whosoever publicly avowed liberal ideas and manners seemed an incendiary and stirred up against himself the instincts of prosperity, the doctrines of moralists, the interests of politicians and the prejudices of the people. Byron chose this moment to praise Voltaire and Rousseau, to admire Napoleon, to avow himself a skeptic, to plead for nature and pleasure against cant and rule, to say that high English society, debauched and hypocritical, made phrases and killed men, to preserve their sinecures and rotten boroughs. As though political hatred were not enough, he contracted, in ad-

dition, literary animosities; attacked the whole body of critics; ran down the poets of the new school, declaring that the most celebrated of them were Claudians, men of the later empire."

Finally he stood at bay, with the whole British pack, forty-power parsons, politicians and poetasters in full cry after him.

*Dogs or men!—for I flatter you in saying
That ye are dogs—your betters far—ye may
Read or read not what I am now essaying
To show you what ye are in every way.*

And thus he came to write his masterpiece, "Don Juan," an unequal work, artistically considered, yet the poet's most notable contribution to the gospel of human liberation. With all its faults, it stands unique in literature and only a genius of the first order could have produced it. "Never was seen in such a clear glass," says Taine, "the tumult of a great genius, the inner life of a genuine poet, always impassioned, inexhaustibly fertile and creative, in whom suddenly, successively, bloomed all human emotions and ideas—sad, lofty, low, hustling one another, mutually impeded, like swarms of insects, that go on humming and feeding on flowers in the mud. He has so much wit, so sudden, so biting, such a prodigality of knowledge, ideas, images, picked up from the four corners of the horizon, that we are captivated, transported beyond limits."

Mr. Lang would have us believe that the verse-lets of John Keats are of vastly more importance;

and so he gives us the old patter about Byron's fame owing much to his rank, and good looks, and personal histrionics. Some *éclat* certainly came from these circumstances being conjoined to the possession of great genius; and that is all. At this late day, it is astonishing that a critic of Mr. Lang's pretensions should raise the puerile question. The truth is, that the iconoclasts who aim their feeble missiles against Byron are in the insane condition of those who attempt a work despaired of alike by gods and reasonable men. . . .

I shall not insult Mr. Lang, literary encyclopædia that he is, by asking him, ever so mildly, how it was that Lord Thurlow's rank failed to save him from utter damnation as a poetaster; nor shall I inquire where are the volumes of the Earl of Carlisle upon whom (though a relative) Byron fleshed his maiden satire. Mr. Lang well knows that not a single literary pretender, lacking Horace's "kindly vein of genius," was ever snatched from oblivion by a fortune or a title. The names of a few such are indeed recalled with the sort of odium attaching to the person who made an indecorous noise in the Roman Senate.

The eminent critic quoted above—who, although a Frenchman, has written the only readable history of English literature—has thus keenly and surely touched the spring of British prejudice against Lord Byron:

"He is so great and so English that from him alone we shall learn more truths of his country and of his age than from all the rest together. His

ideas were banned during his life; it has been attempted to depreciate his genius since his death. To this day English critics are unjust to him. He fought all his life against the society from which he came; and, during his life, as after his death, he suffered the pain of the resentment which he provoked and the repugnance to which he gave rise."



On the eve of his last fateful journey to Greece, Byron said that he had taken poetry for lack of better; that it was not his fit work, and that if he lived ten years more, the world should see something else from him than verses.

"What is a poet? What is he worth? What does he do? He is a babbler!"

And weary of his dreams, weary of the world's applause, sick of his unchallenged but impotent glory, he sought a change in heroical action and died, though with sword scarcely unsheathed, for Greece and freedom.

The great poet deceived himself. He had done his fit work in expressing the revolt of the spirit of his age against the prescriptions of caste and creed; in voicing its aspirations for the ideal of a just democracy. This also is the better part of his poetic fame. Well might he have said in the language of another great poet, his own spiritual heir and disciple:

"I do not know if I shall have merited the placing of a laurel wreath upon my bier. I have never

laid much store in the glory of poetical fame, and whether my song be praised or blamed, it matters little to me. But lay a sword on my coffin-lid, for I have been a steadfast soldier in the war of the liberation of humanity!"

To Byron, as to Heine, humanity accords both the laurel and the sword.



The Nemesis of Carlyle.



HERE was a man great of intellect, world-famous, who during nearly half a century poured forth a gospel that was largely leavened with hatred and scorn of human kind. Sprung from the lowest ranks of the people, nurtured on poverty's most congenial soil, this man never ceased to advocate with stormy eloquence the Rule of the Strong. Rarely, if ever, were his sympathies with the weak and disinherited of the earth,—the class from which he fetched his being. Power and the symbols of power (though he might sometimes affect to gibe at these) were the materials of his worship and the incentives of his genius. Waging bitter war against what he called shams, he yet upheld with all the force of his mind the colossal Shams of Power, of Property and Rank, by which humanity has been held in subjection since the dawn of history. The topmost effort of his talent was and remains a misreading and a travesty of the most salutary event in human history—the French Revolution. His chosen heroes for the most part incarnated the ideal of power which he worshipped. Yet he was not consistent even in the chief article of his creed, for though hating and despising the people, he sometimes canted of democracy, and though reverencing the hem of Cæsar's robe, he sometimes indemnified his haughty spirit by a fling at the Superior Classes.

As an individual this man yielded complete respect to no human being and he never met one whom he would acknowledge to be his equal. His references to his literary contemporaries, even those who had furthered his interests and benefited him, are always couched in a tone of disparagement—never was there an intellectual sovereign who bore so ill a brother near the throne.

At last he died, full of years and bitterness, yet a little softened by time and sorrow, as he would have us, somewhat shamefacedly, believe in his latest memorials. The pity of mankind was irresistibly drawn to the forlorn and loveless end of one who had been so long a great voice in letters, a prophet and a witness of the times. Then came the trusted friend of his last years, the custodian of his sacred honor, charged to report him and his cause aright to the unsatisfied,—and did the act abominable upon his grave! . . .

Froude has been heartily cursed for his exposure of the Carlyle family skeleton, and up to the present his case seems to have gone a-begging for defenders. Certainly no man ever took upon himself a worse or more shameful function than did Froude—to lift, for all the world to see, the breech-clout of the great man who had honored him with as much friendship and esteem as it was in his nature to allow any one, and had charged him with the most sacred trust one man can lay upon another. The head and front of Froude's offending is seen in these excerpts from his pamphlet, "My Relations with Carlyle":

“Various hints were dropped in the circle which gathered at the house in Cheyne Row, about the nature of the relations between them (the Carlyles), that their marriage was not a real marriage, and was only a companionship,” etc.

* * * * *

“Geraldine Jewsbury was Mrs. Carlyle’s most intimate and most confidential friend. * * * She was admitted into Cheyne Row on the closest terms. Mrs. Carlyle in her own troubles spoke and wrote of Geraldine Jewsbury as her Consuelo. * * * When she (Miss Jewsbury) heard that Carlyle had selected me to write his biography, she came to me to say that she had something to tell me which I ought to know. I must have learnt that the state of things had been most unsatisfactory; the explanation of the whole of it was that Carlyle was one of those persons who ought never to have married. Mrs. Carlyle had at first endeavored to make the best of the position in which she found herself. But his extraordinary temper was a consequence of his organization. As he grew older and more famous, he had become more violent and overbearing. She had longed for children, and children were denied to her. This had been at the bottom of all the quarrels and all the unhappiness. * * * She (Miss Jewsbury) said that Mrs. Carlyle never forgave the injury which she believed herself to have received.”

* * * * *

“I had observed in Mrs. Carlyle’s Diary that immediately after the entry of the blue marks on her

arms, she had spent a day with Geraldine at Hampstead. I asked Miss Jewsbury if she recollected anything about it: She remembered it only too well. The marks were made by (Carlyle's) personal violence."

* * * * *

"She (Miss Jewsbury) did not live long after this. In her last illness, when she knew that she was dying, and when it is entirely inconceivable that she would have uttered any light or ill-considered gossip, she repeated all this to me, with many curious details. I will mention one, as it shows that Carlyle did not know, when he married, what his constitution was. *The morning after his wedding-day he tore to pieces the flower garden at Comley Bank in a fit of ungovernable fury.*"

This is awful, and perhaps at all points it has no parallel in literary biography. Yet I believe the final judgment of the world will not be so harsh upon Froude as it is at present. I believe his offence, bad as it must be deemed, arose from a perverted casuistry rather than from a motive of conscious and deliberate malice. If Froude was the devil in this business, let us at least give the devil his due. He was himself a writer of high performance, endued with more than the usual sensitiveness that belongs to the literary character. He was naturally solicitous about his own reputation—had not he, also, a name to leave to future times, and should he suffer an evil blot upon it? He saw

himself attacked by the greedy and unscrupulous Scotch relatives of Carlyle. His feelings were deeply injured. His honor was impeached and the basest motives were attributed to him. Something of all this was due to Carlyle's own vacillating, uncandid course with regard to the nature and extent of the responsibility which he had imposed upon Froude. The latter disclaims any personal ill-feeling toward Carlyle upon this or any other account, but one can hardly doubt that he resented the clumsy checks and balances that hindered his task and at last brought it to ruin. It is enough, from Froude's point of view, that he had done a great and peculiarly thankless labor in fulfilling his trust toward Carlyle. It had involved, first, a painful responsibility, then a host of anxieties, and last of all, it had drawn a maddening persecution upon his closing term of life, which, as he tells us, he had looked forward to as a peaceful harbor. Baited by all the pack, wounded, desperate and dying, he struck out in defence of his honor and good faith, and, passing into the Silence, left his vindication to the world.

Whatever judgment we may form as to the means he employed to clear his name, it will be difficult to impeach the sincerity of Froude's solemn witness in the shadow of death. I, for one, do not believe, as so many affect to believe, that his last act in this world was to erect a monumental slander to the memory of his friend. To hold this detestable view, which has been lightly assumed by the mob of Froude's censors, were to think worse of human

nature than Carlyle himself did in his most lycanthropic humor. . . .

I have said that Froude's disclosure concerning Carlyle can not at all points be matched by any instance known to me in literary biography. This statement has regard to the eminence of both men, the nature of the trust imposed upon Froude, and the entire moral history of the affair. But as to Carlyle's alleged sexual impotency there need, of course, be no vulgar wonder, since it is a common enough physical misfortune. Yet it is this matter, as declared baldly in Froude's posthumous pamphlet, which has chiefly infuriated the old maids of the literary press, as if it were not under Heaven conceivable that the author of "Sartor Resartus" should have lacked the power to beget a child of his body! Well, we have the best evidence for believing that the author of "The Stones of Venice" labored under a similar incapacity, and the regrettable fact, though it lost him his beautiful wife (who, woman-like, thought less of his genius than of certain other things), seems in no way to have impaired the virility of his style; yet I believe, as in the case of Carlyle, that it is answerable for the scolding element in so much of his work. Oh, you ladies of both sexes, have you never heard the true story of one who was a greater genius, a greater scold and a fiercer hater of humanity than even your idol, Carlyle? Have you never wept over the piteous tragedy of Stella, which moved the kindly cynic Thackeray to his finest pathos? Was the Nemesis of

Swift the Nemesis of Carlyle?—Look at this parallel:

Froude.—He (Carlyle) had said, in his journal, that there was a secret connected with him unknown to his closest friends; that no one knew and no one would know it, and that without a knowledge of it no true biography of him was possible.

Thackeray.—A remarkable story is told by Scott, of Delany, who interrupted Archbishop King and Swift in a conversation which left the prelate in tears, and from which Swift rushed away with marks of strong terror and agitation in his countenance, upon which the Archbishop said to Delany, "You have just met the most unhappy man on earth; but on the subject of his wretchedness you must never ask a question."

Swift was many years in his grave ere the legend crystallized which is now held to explain the riddle of his relations with Stella and Vanessa, as well as a great part of his misanthropy. In what seems the similar case of Carlyle, the world has not been obliged to wait for the legend, thanks to the ill-advised attacks upon the man who knew the story and who was goaded into telling it. The Swift legend belongs to an age of greater immorality, perhaps, of less publicity, certainly, than our own. It is probable enough, though supported only by the vaguest hearsay. The chief witness, the injured party, never blabbed, so far as we know, and died with her secret. Stella had no Geraldine Jewsbury to confide in, and she submitted her will to the terrible Dean (who could yet be so kind and loving!)

in all ways. Besides, and this is the core of it, she loved Swift with a great yet humble passion and with the fullest surrender of self; he was her god, her idol in whom she would neither see nor admit defect. Quarrel with him?—why, she could not have survived one angry look from his awful brow, but would have perished under his frown, as did her unhappy rival of many years. This was a very different thing to the love of Jane Welsh for the great man to whom fate had united her and in whose tragic life-story her name will now forever bear a painful interest. A story, says Froude, as sternly tragic, as profoundly pathetic, as the great Theban drama. . . .

Yes, the Nemesis of Swift was the Nemesis of Carlyle, but the greatest satirist that has ever lashed the follies and vices of mankind, never conceived such a masterpiece of ironic fury as that scene at Comley Bank on the morning after Carlyle's wedding-day. This is the heaviest clod of humiliation that Froude cast upon that grave in Ecclefechan church-yard. It is enough to move our pity for the great man, so tragically shamed by the disclosure, who was himself little given to pitying the weakness and misfortunes of our common humanity.



At Poe's Cottage.



MY mind was possessed with the mournful image of the Poet, the romance and tragedy of his life. This was the very air he breathed. Here were the scenes amid which he passed his last years with her, the Child-Wife, whose memory still mingles with his like a consecration. All that sad story of the rare genius fettered by poverty which eats out the soul,—chained, too; in the deadlier bonds of evil habit,—came upon me with the poignant force that the association of locality alone can give.

It had rained intermittently all week, ending at last in a furious night of storm—such a night, I could not but think, in which his unquiet spirit would have rejoiced to walk abroad. The morning rose, calm, refreshed and beautiful, with the added peace of the Sabbath. I was early on the Kingsbridge road, and—without ever having seen the place, or even a picture of it, without any direction, verbal or otherwise—something led me straight to the humble little cottage which had been the home of Poe.

Homely and poor indeed it is; but, thrilled as I was by the first glimpse of it, penetrated by a sudden realized sense of that immortal failure, the low small house speaking silently of the

“*Master*

Whom unmerciful disaster followed fast and followed faster,”

took in my eyes the dignity and pathos of a shrine. How much more potent, after all, is a living memory than a mere literary reminiscence! Elsewhere one might think of Poe in the conventional manner: of his undoubted genius, yet unequal literary product; of his fickleness, his egotism, his constant recourse to friends in time of need and repudiation of them with the first ray of returning prosperity; of the legacy of many devils he had inherited, bringing to nought all his nobler resolves and ambitions; lastly, of that fatal curse of drink and drugs which dogged him from defeat to defeat until it wrought out his untimely death. All of which is true as truth,—for have not many sage moralists told us so, and doth it not delight the whole Tribe of Dulness to be able to point the finger of scorn at the faults and the failures of Genius?

But, look you, friend, here is not a place for harsh judgments, however condign they may be, upon the Man and Brother whom this humble roof once sheltered. Through this narrow gateway on which I lean, how often he passed, bearing his earth-burden of toil, and sorrow, and deferred hope that maketh the heart sick! His feet have worn these stones with their daily imprint. This small world was his to whom imagination opened realms without bound. This poor cot afforded lodgment to a head that could have beggared the dreams of *Prospero*. Here he was often happy with the wife of

his youth, who came to him a child, and still young and lovely, was called away. Through this very gateway—not changed at all—they carried her wasted form. One feels the hush upon the curious, pitying throng of bystanders, after a lapse of fifty years. She died of want, it is said—I am glad to believe that heart-hunger had nothing to do with it. . . .

The little house stands with its shoulder to the street, and is neighbored by some rather imposing villa residences. It has one fairly large window looking on a small grass-plot in front, and two tiny windows which light the low sleeping-room upstairs—for there is an “upstairs,” although the cottage is practically of only one story. Over the large window is an effigy of a raven, which looks as if it might have been dashed off by a handy boy. There is, besides, an inscription stating that the house was occupied by Edgar Allan Poe from 1845 to 1849; also, that it is now the property of E. J. Chauvet, D. D. S., Fordham, N. Y. The said Chauvet, D. D. S., lives next door in one of the imposing residences I have mentioned. His house is five times larger and cost many times more money than Poe’s; but people in the neighborhood say he wants a good deal more money than *that* before he will yield to the City of New York his title in the Poe cottage.

After a brief conversation with the doctor, I decided he was not the man to furnish off-hand a luminous estimate of the Poet’s genius, or even to supply a bibliography of the Poet’s works. One could

not, however, praise too highly his zealous desire that the city should take the cottage off his hands—at his own price—and I readily fell in with his view touching the too common neglect of genius, without being entirely blind to his interested application of it. It is a world of irony at best—is it not, my masters?—and in such a world Chauvet, D. D. S., with his fine big house and his patronage of the dead Poet, with *his* poor little house, holds a place in strict accord with the eternal unities. The humor of this observation would probably be lost upon the doctor—I fear it impressed me so strongly as to make me lose a great part of his valuable conversation.

Before the cottage is a blasted cherry tree, half of which has been cut down, leaving a blackened trunk upon which the penknives of relic-hunters have wrought additional havoc. It stands not an unworthy symbol of the man whose eyes often rested on it in its greenness and vigor. Across the street a pleasant park, named after the Poet, has been set out. Thither it is proposed to move the historic cottage when a settlement shall have been made with the present owner. Knowing the mind of Chauvet, D. D. S., I should recommend the committee having the negotiation in charge, to come to terms with that gentleman as soon as practicable. They will not better the bargain by waiting.

The cottage is now tenanted by an Irish lady named Kenealy, who has no part or lot in its traditions, and who is obviously in doubt whether the public interest in her domicile is to be ascribed to

a proper motive. In the course of a very brief conversation, she contrived to make me understand that whatever "goings on" might have taken place in the house when "other people" lived there, nothing could be urged in reproach of *her* tenancy! As I stood musing at the gate, a good-natured countryman of Mrs. Kenealy's joined me, and at once volunteered some surprising information touching the house and its former celebrated tenant. Lowering his voice cautiously as a party of ladies drew near, "Do ye know, sir," he said, "that the ould boss wrote 'The Raven' sitting at the little windy there furninst ye—one night affther a dhrunk!" And he added with true Milesian humor, "Would ye wondher at it?" . . .

Going away slowly and turning more than once to look again—I suspect that Chauvet, D. D. S., thought I was trying to get a better view of *his* house—my mind dwelt upon the strange fortune of Poe's literary fame. The chequered history of letters affords no more striking contrast than the present literary estate of this writer, as compared with the sordid failure of his life. To the despised literary hack, the job-man of newspapers and magazines, who was never able to command a decent subsistence by his pen, has fallen an aftermath of reputation such as few of his contemporaries enjoy. His works, translated into a more sympathetic language by a Frenchman of genius whose mind seems to have been a replica of his own, have yielded him a proud and enviable fame among the most appreciative and artistic people in the world. His name

abroad is illustrious and honored, while many of his contemporaries who outshone him at home have gained no foreign suffrage.

Nor is this all. Even at home, in the land where an evil destiny cast him in an epoch of brutal materialism, his fame is steadily rising. Whatever the awards of a factitious "Hall of Immortals," in the true pantheon of American letters no name is writ higher than his. Fortunes have been made by the publication of his books, edited with anxious scholarship, issued in sumptuous form—books which never yielded their author a living and might not avail to keep hunger and misery from the Beloved of his heart. The humble home in which he dwelt has become a veritable shrine that will ere long be cared for by the State. Each succeeding year new biographies of him are put forth, new and ever-heightened estimates of his genius are made. The artist has survived the man; the immortal success the temporary failure. And the world is making for Edgar Allan Poe—as for so many other children of light whose fate it was to walk in darkness—its immemorial atonement.



Literary Folk.



TURNING over a catalogue illustrated with portraits of authors, the other day, I was painfully struck with the ordinariness of the lot, in point of good looks. This was especially true of the women authors, and the sad conclusion was forced upon me that the jealous Muses impart the smallest possible share of their own immortal beauty to the earthly daughters of the lyre. After all, there never was or will be a poem equal to a really pretty woman. I have known literary men who would grow languid even upon the subject of their own works, while the perennial theme of the woman made for love never failed to kindle in them fresh eloquence and inspiration.

Beauty is a woman's right, and we say what we do not believe when we talk of the superior charms of the female intelligence. Along in middle life it doubtless occurs for the first time to many men that women have minds as well as bodies, but during the period when Nature is most exigent, the matter gives them no concern.

I believe no woman ever regretted that she was loved for her beautiful body rather than for her gifted mind. Of course, even a divinely pretty woman has no license to be a fool—and few are the men who will call her such. In fact, for women up

to the fortieth year, beauty is an excellent substitute for every kind of mental accomplishment.

I once knew a woman who was clever enough to dispense with good looks, if ever a woman was. Yet she lamented her face constantly,—which indeed might have been a better one,—and often obtruded upon my notice her one claim to consideration, in a physical way—a delicate and charming foot. Ah, touching vanity of women! This lady often remarked with a conviction based upon her own feelings of deprivation, that George Eliot would have gladly bartered her literary genius for a good face. No doubt she would, at least before her grand climacteric, which she had surely passed before she married her third husband. Her French contemporary, George Sand, had a few more men as well as greater physical charm and a less factitious talent.

No: literary genius never consoled a woman for an ugly face, for to love and be loved is every woman's natural desire. George Eliot shows her spite in her own works and in true womanly fashion resents Step-dame Nature's unkindness to herself by giving a bad end to every character whom she has endowed with personal beauty. She hurries *Maggie Tulliver* and *Tito Melema* to their doom, not like a literary artist, but like an executioner. Be sure of this, ladies: "Romola" and "The Mill on the Floss" would each have had a different ending if the mother of Mary Ann Evans had not too seriously considered a horse's face at a certain critical time. . . .

The men in my catalogue can boast little advantage over the women, though their case is not so sad, since beauty is not expected of them. Yet a contemplation of this gallery of portraits does not induce cheerfulness. Such ravaged heads, such lamentable faces! "Picture me young and handsome as I once was," said Heine, "not like an emaciated Christ of Morales." I wish some of these authors would practise upon us a similar deception.

It sometimes occurs that you form a favorable idea of an author's personality from his literary style. You go on happy in your illusion until one day a photograph in the *Critic* or the *Bookman* shocks you into a new attitude, generally of hostility and aversion. A good many men, as well as most women, will not read an author if they dislike his personality. Think of Byron's head and face which stamped him as a god, and remember how the world, like a woman, passionately lamented him. Call up now the weirdly contorted Cockney phiz of Kipling, and wonder no more that he is the best hated and most liberally cursed poet of our time.

As a rule, the tradition of personal beauty does not obtain in the *genus poetarum*. Nature dislikes to double her gifts. For one Byron or Goethe she makes many a blear-eyed Horace, many a deformed Scarron or grinning Voltaire. Of all the fictions of the poets the most flattering to themselves is that of the beautiful Apollo. Perhaps it was not so much a fiction before the incident of the flaying of Marsyas—after that the god seems to have visited his disfavor upon all his mortal competitors.

Not all, I would say, for now and then he makes an exception, and surely he has done so in the case of Edwin Markham. Here is a poet who looks the part—the deep eye that denotes prophetic power, the Jovian head, the godlike port, all bear the manifest seal of that character which was recognized as divine by the wise ancients until the ignoble race of publishers arose to degrade it.

I believe Edwin Markham to be a true poet—the highest voice in American letters today. I also regard him as a brave man, since he dares to live his poetry and *by* it—a feat not less difficult than to have written “The Man with the Hoe.” Perhaps it is unfortunate that Mr. Markham should be so generally hailed as the laureate of the new socialism—I do not find it easy to imagine Apollo tuning his lyre to the praises of the trade-unions. There are truer, finer things in his poetry than the philippics which he hurls at the frowning brow of Capital. His minor strains—tender little songs of his heart and home—to my mind better attest his poetical inspiration.

From this you are not to infer that I regard the Poet’s clamant humanitarianism as a pose, or in any degree insincere. On the contrary, I have received from no other man so strong an impression of moral cleanliness and intellectual integrity. Would I had known him when he was younger—would I might see the poetical sins of his youth! This Poet was not always a priest. There must have been terrible storms of passion in that strong soul ere he came to us, chastened and exalted by the

trial of years. But Edwin Markham, with rare discretion for a poet, will not suffer us to touch upon that page.



I have a heart full of sympathy for the Literary Woman—for which I well know I shall not receive her gratitude. She is so numerous and prolific (alas! chiefly of books), so brilliant and enviable, so panegyricized and paraphrased, in short, so eminently able to take care of herself, that my concern for her must needs appear impertinent.

Well, I shall go on pitying her, in spite of her resentment—pitying her for the brave fight and the futile effort and the success that is little worth; often, too, for the calm joys of maternity and domestic peace which a factitious ambition has shut out of her woman's life.

This latter is, I suspect, a sore point with Milady Literary—if she were ever to lose her angelic temper, it would be on account of this. In such a moment, how intense her loathing of bestial, philoprogenitive Man, grossly seeking to divert her from the passionless joys of literature! Curiously it chances that the desire of so many women to write is only another form of the maternal instinct. Travail the woman must—her woman's flesh requires these natural pains—but the pangs of literary conception are to many of the sex a sufficient and agreeable substitute. I know a literary woman who has had both experiences, and her now exclusive devotion to her Art (the capital is hers) tells the rest of the story.

Women enjoy writing for its own sake more than men do.

It was my pleasant fortune to meet a lady, not long ago, who came to ask my poor counsel with a view to having her MSS. published. She is not famous and yet not absolutely without reputation. I believe she has quite as much talent as the run of literary women. I should think her capable of writing a book that would make a good mediocre success—the sort of thing at which women always beat men. But the point I want to make about this person (and I think it applies generally to the *scribentes sorores*) refers to her astonishing looseness of faculty. In this I read alike the success and the failure of women in literature.

To most literary men the act of mental composition is painful; to some great writers it has been superlatively so. To most writing women I believe it is quite the reverse—nay, unconscionably agreeable and easy. Hence the close analogy between a writing woman's talk and her literary product; hence also the latter facile agreeableness. Milady of the MSS. is here an excellent witness. To say nothing of her prose, which she throws off at will and in fearsome quantity, she exudes sonnets at every pore. I examined a bulky typewritten volume of these, some five hundred in number. There was no denying a certain poetic faculty and a dreadful poetic facility. The lady rhymed well and scanned with accuracy. Her mind was well furnished with the usual stock paraphernalia of the versifier. Everything was there you had a right to

expect, so far as prosody goes and mere verbal mechanics; but of the heaven-born surprise and thrill and uplift of true poetry, not a pulse, not a breath, not a flutter.

And the burden of all this rhymed futility was love, super-passionate love, for the lady is not an *ingenue* (*sic*), and so, naturally revolting from the realism of the senses and the enforced contact of the conjugal relation, her passion (i. e., the passion of her verse) is frozen, though splendid—a cold, cold thing, fit for the nebulae or the interstellar spaces.

The lady is fair, fat and perilously near forty. Her well-nourished person suggests images strongly at variance with the anæmic ardors of her verse.

“Surely you do not mean all this?” I hazarded.

She smirked and replied, “But why not? It is poetry!”

I felt there was nothing to be said and, like Dante’s lovers, we read no more that day. . . .

At another time I asked Milady of the Sonnets, if it was not a terribly arduous task to have composed all this poetry. She smiled with a self-complacent disdain that might have abashed Melpomene herself.

“Not at all—I simply could not help it. To write poetry has been the one great joy of my life since—since—” she hesitated and did not finish the sentence. There was a moment’s pause while Milady strove with her memories.

Resuming with an effort, she added: “Far from being a painful task, it has been a pleasure and a

recreation. I have only to take up my pen, when it simply flows so that I can hardly write down the lines as fast as they come. And so perfect that I seldom change a word!"

I hope I am not without feeling for the pathos of this confession of the fruitful, though ineffective, poetess. She had wasted years that might have been more happily and usefully employed. She had (as I learned afterwards) separated from her husband, whose chief offence was that he failed to do becoming honor to her literary genius. Her vain hope had been buoyed up at long intervals by a perfunctory word of praise from some literary character upon whom she had forced her manuscripts. No publisher would bring out her work unless he were guaranteed against loss. This guaranty she was unable to furnish, and so the years of deferred hope and heart-ache and cankering envy that will ere long leave her a blighted, disappointed, miserable old woman.

Is it not sad, Mesdames? . . .



Dickens: A Reverie.



EAR, immortal Dickens! So the wise publishers have discovered a "revival" of interest in the Master of English story, and they are paying him the compliment of many new editions. As if it were not his province to lay his strong toil of grace on each new generation; as if he were not of those beloved Immortals who live on forever in the changeless romance of the young: as if, in fine, his world-wide audience had not been steadily growing in the space since his death until now it is by far the greatest that has ever done honor to an English writer. Truly messieurs the publishers shall easily persuade us.

But I for one am glad at any rate to hear of this "revival," which never ceases, and to enjoy the publishers' accounts of those fine new editions of the old yet ever young Dickens. Books were written better in his day, no doubt, though Mr. Howells, who was once a daring young heretic on this subject and is now himself under the hand of time, will not have it so. But surely they were not made so well, at least for popular reading. And here the publisher is entitled to his bit of praise, however we may smile at that evidence of the ingenuity of the publishing trade, the Dickens revival. It will, I think, be always a safe venture to prepare for and to announce a "great revival of interest" in the works of Mr. Charles Dickens—especially with an

eye to the new generation. Other authors dispute the fickle preference of the old, the disillusioned, and the too mature—the young are always for Mr. Dickens.

And the sceptre shall not pass from him. Over twenty years ago I first read my Dickens in the paper-covered books of the Franklin Square Library. They were ugly in appearance, clumsy to hold and, worse lack of all to a young reader, there were no pictures to give form and pressure to the story. But all this disparagement is the work of my later thought. Surely I was not then conscious of any fault or blemish in the Aladdin's treasure that had suddenly fallen to me from the sky. Pity the man who is not loyal to his first loves! I would give much to taste again the feelings of joy and rapture and wonder which then were mine while making my breathless course through those ungainly publications of the Franklin Square.

I was a boy then—God help me!—the sort of boy, I dare believe, the Master had much in mind; and a whole world of bitter experience lies between me and that happy time. Shall I ever forget the bare cold little room where I spent so many unwearied hours, hugging my treasure in both arms; often hungry but forgetting it, fed as I then was with the food of romance; oftener cold, but unheeding that, too, warmed as I was with the glow of fancy? And the smell of the fresh-printed pages as I turned them with trembling, eager hands (the door of the little room shut and I alone)—have I ever since known the like?—could the costliest book now yield

me such a thrill?—alas! could any spell, however potent, again make me free of the vanished Kingdom of romance?

O poor little room, which saw that miracle, the lighting up of a boy's imagination, the swelling chivalry of his young heart, the simple joy of his candid youth,—I look back now with lamentable vision on the long way I have come, and I know I have met nothing so good in my journey. Would to God, little room, I might wake even now as from a vexed and sorrow-laden dream, to find myself that boy once again, sheltered by you and heedless of hunger and cold, could he but slake his thirst at the Enchanted Fountain! . . .

And sure these blessed things of memory have played me a trick, or I am in very truth a boy again—dear God, do but grant it, a boy again! For I would swear that just now a breeze of youth smote my cheek, and lo! in a trice I am whirled back into the past. Lost and breathless a moment, I soon find myself in a garden with my pretty mother, bolting furtive gooseberries and trying to look unmoved . . . A wind arises and now I am in the house with Peggotty (I still feel the touch of her finger like a nutmeg grater), poring over the Crorkendill Book and vexing her simple soul with my persistent questions. Another change and look!—I see little Em'ly, and Ham, and Mr. Peggotty, and Mrs. Gummidge (bless him for that name!). Barkis has just brought me in the cart and I am so proud to be a Yarmouth Bloater (oh memory!). Isn't it fine to live in a house made out of an old

boat and to hear the wind come creeping about it at night when you are snug in bed and just dropping off to sleep! . . . How sweet little Em'ly is, and oh, how I love her with all the innocent love of my boyish heart! The nights I lie awake, thinking about her and praying that she may come to no harm! . . . Mr. Murdstone is worse than ever since that day when he beat me and I bit him on the hand. His beard is very black and so thick that his skin looks blue after shaving—confound his whiskers and his memory! . . . My box is ready, Mr. Barkis is here again, and my mother comes out to say goodbye to me, with her baby in her arms. She would have said something more to me, I know, but *he* was there to restrain her. “Clara, Clara, be firm!” I hear his warning voice. But she looked intently at me, holding up her baby in her arms. So I lost her, so I saw her many a time afterward at school, a silent Presence at my bedside, holding up her baby in her arms. . . .

Comes a wooden-legged man stumping through my dream and eying me fiercely. Was his name Tungay, and did he put a placard on my back reading “Take Care of Him—He Bites”?—I must ask Traddles about this. . . .

The “horfling” and I have just parted in tears—she to St. Luke’s Workhouse and Mr. Micawber to the Fleet, still gallantly figuring on his insoluble problem. I am somewhat comforted in the assurance that Mrs. Micawber (*with* the twins) will never desert him . . . Now I am in Canterbury. It is a fine day and the rooks are flying

about the old cathedral. Here is poor Mr. Dick, still bothered about the head of Charles I., and the Doctor placidly at work on his dictionary (not having advanced a letter since the old days!), and Uriah Heep deep in Tidd's Practice. ("Oh, what a writer Mr. Tidd is, Mr. Copperfull!") . . . How familiar seems this house, with the hallowed sense of early dreams! I enter and lo! what graceful figure is this coming down the stair to meet me, a bunch of household keys jingling at her waist? What was it about Agnes Wickfield that made me associate her always with the peace and radiance of a stained-glass window? . . .

How the scar flamed out on Miss Dartle's pale cheek when Steerforth asked her to sing! . . . I hate that sneak Littimer who always makes me feel as if I was too young (alas, too young!) . . . Yarmouth again and Steerforth with me, more handsome and fascinating and irresistible than even. Yes, though he broke her heart, and mine, too—(I have never recovered from it!)—still do I forgive him for the old love I bore him. Let me keep the sacred pledge of my boyish faith, to remember him at his best, as he asked me to, that night when we left the old boat together and I marked something different in him; let me think of him as I loved to see him in our school days, lying asleep with his head on his arm . . . So they found him after the great storm and wreck, lying at rest amid the ruins of the home he had wronged. . . .

Ours was the marsh country down by the sea, where I first saw the Convict, what time the guns

were firing and the hulks lay at anchor near by . . . Wasn't it kind of dear old Joe to put that inscription over his bad and worthless father—

*Whatsomever the failings on his part,
Remember, reader, he had that good in his heart . .*

I saw that snorting old Pumblechook yesterday when I was on my way to Miss Havisham's—he always makes me feel guilty, as if he knew something bad about me. . . .

What a strange lady Miss Havisham is, and why does she stay, dressed all in white and covered with old bridal finery, in a room where candles burn always and from which the light of day is shut out? . . . Oh, Estelle, Estelle!—how beautiful she was to-day! How I love her and how she wounds me with her disdain! Yet once I plucked up courage to ask her for a kiss, and she slapped me on the cheek—I feel the sting of it yet! But my turn came when I had whipped the prowling boy behind the brewery wall and she, unseen by us both, had watched the battle. “You may kiss me if you please,” she said, with flushed cheek—how lovely she was in her conquered pride, and what a reward was mine! . . .

Ever the best of friends, ain't us, Pip?—Dear old Joe! shall I ever forget when he came to see me at my lodgings in London and the trouble he had to keep his hat from falling? What a giant he was at the forge, though as gentle as a child! Surly Orlick soon found his master.

*Beat it out, beat it out, old Clem,
With a clink to the stout, old Clem! . . .*

Bentley Drummle came to Mr. Pocket's school when he was a head taller than that gentleman and several heads thicker than most young gentlemen . . . I can not believe that Estelle will marry that fool and brute. . . He came up the stairway as I held the light for him and looked at me with a peculiar expression. . . "When the colonists rode by me on their blooded horses I said to myself, I am making a better gentleman nor any of you". . . How strange it was of Mr. Jaggers to ask his housekeeper to show us her hands! . . . Good God! Could it be possible that this convict, yet my benefactor, Abel Magwitch, was Estelle's father? . . . I went to the forge and it was strangely quiet. The house was closed. I walked toward the little church and suddenly I met them, Joe, smiling and awkward in his Sunday clothes, Biddy in her best attire—"It is my wedding day and I am married to Joe!" . . .

A broad stream of light united the judge and the condemned, reminding some there present of that greater Judgment to which all alike were passing and which can not err. Standing for a moment, a distinct speck in that sea of light, the prisoner said, "My lord, I have received my sentence from the hand of the Almighty, but I bow to yours." . . A woman was sitting there alone—it was Estelle! "We are friends?" I said. "Yes," she answered, "and will continue friends apart." I took her hand and we went out of the ruined churchyard together. The mists were rising as they rose on that morning long ago when I first left the forge. And in all the broad

expanse of tranquil light they showed to me, I saw no shadow of another parting from her. . . . Why this must be Mr. Pecksniff's Architectooraloo-ral Academy! I hear Mercy giggling on the stair. There is the portrait by Spiller, the bust by Spoker, and as I live, here is Tom Pinch still making a shamefaced attempt to learn the violin between the bed-clothes. Poor Tom Pinch! Have I ever seen simple-hearted kindness and truth in the world without thinking of thee?—have I ever seen unctuous pretence and rascality without recalling thy master? And yet they say thy Creator could not draw a character according to nature—the fools! . .

Yo-ho—a race with the moon. I am making that famous journey with Tom Pinch by stage coach to London. But lo! we have not gone far when we overhaul Nicholas and Smike on the road, fleeing to London, too, after thrashing Squeers and turning loose the tender youth of Dotheboys. Shall we make room for them?—well! . . But have a care, coachman, that Jonas Chuzzlewit shall not get a lift with us, for we have a dreadful suspicion of Something he left behind him in the wood. . . Who were those two that crossed the road before us just then and slunk away in the shadow, a big hulking fellow and a boy?—I'll wager it was Bill Sykes and Oliver Twist going to crack a crib—more of Fagin's deviltry! . . Yo-ho! the lights of London!—and here we are at last at London Bridge where, quite giddy and breathless, we get down with Tom Pinch and the others—did I say that we had also picked up Codlin and Short, Mr. Scrooge and

Tim Linkinwater, and a silent gentleman who cracked his joints incessantly?—I catch a glimpse of Rogue Riderhood slinking about his evil affairs and still wearing that old cap like a drowned dog. Drowned! That was the word in flaring black letters which stared from a dead wall—I saw John Harmon, muffled to the ears, stand before it a long time. . . . Now in the lighted city, and who of all strangely assorted beings of fact or fancy should I see in close conversation but Mr. Jarvis Lorry of Tellson's and Mr. Tulkinghorn of Lincoln's Inn Fields! No doubt they are talking about the strange disappearance of Lady Dedlock—I wonder if that boy limping past them, unheeded, who looks so like Poor Jo, could throw any light on it. . . . But what grotesque figures are these under the corner lamp, with bonneted heads bobbing at each other in eager colloquy? My life! it's Miss Flite and Sairey Gamp (dear Mrs. Gamp! thou too art said to be of an unreal world, yet do I hold thee dearer than all the joyless realities of their realism). I catch a few words—"the Man from Shropshire"—and I surmise they are gossiping about the strange end of that unfortunate martyr of Chancery, who dropped dead on his one thousandth interruption of the Court. . . .

Plash-water weir mill lock of a balmy summer's evening and a rough fellow dressed like a bargeman, with a red neckerchief, who looks strangely like the schoolmaster Bradley Headstone. Was that the careless, handsome Eugene Wrayburn who went on before? Hurry, for God's sake, ere murder be

done—you have not seen that man as I did, smash his desperate hand against a stone wall. Hark! a blow!—another!—a splash—we are too late. But look! Lizzie Hexam is there before us, rowing her boat with firm nerve and practised skill. Now thanks to God for that old time, and let me but save his life, even though it be for another! . . .

At Dr. Blimber's select academy for young gentlemen, and Master Bitherstone has just asked me, in a crisis of wounded feeling, if I would please map out for him an easy overland route to Bengal. I listened distractedly for my mind was fixed on the New Boy. And who is this little fellow sitting sadly alone while the grave clock seems to repeat the Doctor's greeting: "How, is, my, lit, tle, friend, how, is, my, lit, tle, friend?" Oh thou rejected of men and critics, let the world deny thee as it may, I call Heaven to witness that I was once as thou; that I wept true tears over thy young sorrows; that no child of my own house is more real to me than Paul Dombey! . . .

Mr. Richard Swiveller has just confided to me the extraordinary dilemma in which he finds himself—we were having a modest quencher, which induced the confidence. Mr. Swiveller's creditors have increased at such a rate that the principal thoroughfares are now closed to him, and in order to get only across the way, he is obliged to go into the country. I should have heard more on this interesting subject but for the sudden appearance, at the door, of a small person—Mr. Swiveller humorously called her the Marchioness—who made frantic gestures,

importing that his presence was required in the establishment of Sampson Brass, Barrister-at-law. . . Little Nell was dead. No sleep so calm and beautiful, so free from trace of pain, so fair to look upon. She seemed a creature fresh from the hand of God—not one that had lived and suffered Death. . . (And this, too, they have rejected, because, they say, it is blank verse!).

Have you ever heard the legend of Bleeding Heart Yard where Mr. Panks collects the rent and the Patriarch benevolently airs his bumps?—

*Bleeding heart, bleeding heart,
Bleeding away!*

Mrs. Plornish (who translates the Italian so elegantly) told it me not long ago, but though it was very sad, I have forgotten it. Perhaps because I was watching the eager eyes of John Baptist Cavalletto and wondering what he knows about one Rigaud whose moustache goes up and whose nose comes down. . . I am sure now that if Arthur Clennam had not given his heart to the young lady and there had been no such thing as her engagement to Another, the rain would still have behaved just as it did—that is, it would have fallen heavily, drearily. But oh! I did not think so then. . .

“Amy, is Bob on the lock?” . . .

I see an old man with white hair standing at the head of a rich banquet table and looking strangely upon the two long lines of astonished guests. Then I see Her go swiftly to his side and lay her hand on his arm, without shame, proud of him, loving him.

And in her eyes I see the fulness of that love through which the human reaches the divine—that love which, among English writers, Charles Dickens has best figured and expressed. . . . “Ladies and gentlemen, I am called the Father of the Marshalsea. It is, ahem, a title, hum, hum, I may say earned, ahem, earned, by a somewhat protracted period of, ahem, residence. On this account it is, ahem, customary for visitors and, hum, hum, students, to make me a little offering, which usually takes the form of, ahem, a slight pecuniary donation. This is my daughter, ladies and gentlemen. Born here, bred here!”

So they pass in review before my fond memory—the people of Dickens: a wonderful procession, fantastic, varied, extraordinary, not surely of this world, perhaps, but then of a better one—the magic realm of the master wizard of English story. And yet I am glad that I read him as a boy—that he belongs with so much else that is precious to the enchanted period of life. Rich as that genius was, and on many counts without a rival, one must I fear break with the charm when the illusions of youth are past. This is less the fault and loss of Dickens than our own.

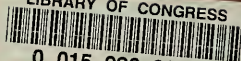
Therefore, loving Dickens as I do, I am yet not ashamed to confess that since boyhood I have re-read but few of his books—one of these was the “Tale of Two Cities,” and either the drinker was changed or there was something alien in the draught. I do not own a set of them, not even the

old Franklin Square novels, which, a ragged regiment, have long since fluttered away into that dear and irrecoverable country where lie the lost treasures of youth. So I can honestly say that in the foregoing pages I have jotted down, without art or method, some memories still fresh after twenty years—it is perhaps given to few authors to inspire us with such lasting recollections. Yet if I were to lose all these, I should not be beggared: there would still remain a world of Dickens in my remembrance.

Finis.



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